HARRISON's EDITION.

THE

# B A B L E R.

BY HUGH KELLY, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

L O N D O N:
Printed for HARRISON and Co. N° 18, Paternoster Row.
M DCC LXXXVI.

# P R E F A C E.

THERE is no ſubject in the world upon which an author ſpeaks with a greater degree of latent pride, or a deeper air of outward humility, than his own productions.—He is perfectly ſenſible that they are trifles—yet he is bold enough to publiſh them—and while he ſeems to relinquiſh every title to the favourable opinion of the world, he returns his warmeſt thanks for paſt obligations, and indirectly tells us he has obtained it—thus the public are reduced to the agreeable alternative, either of acknowledging his merit, or reflecting upon their own judgment—and the conſequence generally is, that through a fear of diſparaging the credit of our taſte, or perſpicuity, we exalt him at once into a writer of conſummate modeſty, and uncommon abilities.

The author of the BABLER, however, wiſhes to ſteer between the extremes of an oſtentatious parade, and an affected diffidence; he would by no means preſumptuouſly place his pieces upon a forum with the eſſays of ſome cotemporaries, nor would he meanly ſink them to the level of others—a firſt-rate reputation is no leſs beyond his hopes, than his deſerts; yet, if in the ſcale of honourable compariſon, he riſes with no capital degree of merit, he is ſatisfied that he cannot be the loweſt in the balance of contempt.—This declaration he is the more emboldened to make, as during the courſe of his publication, he conſtantly had the honour of being re-printed by the greateſt number of his literary fellow-labourers in the vineyard of the public, and have been often happy enough to go through half a dozen editions, in half the number of days.

In the concluding number of theſe volumes, the author has made ſome obſervations on the nature of eſſay writing in general, and rendered it inconteſtibly evident, that there is no walk of genius which lies under ſo many difficulties; yet of all the various eſſayiſts, the news-paper drudge is the moſt unfortunately circumſtanced; ſmall as the boundaries of a SPECTATOR, a RAMBLER, a WORLD, an ADVENTURER, or a CONNOISSEUR, may ſeem, the news-paper writer is under a neceſſity of moving in a ſtill more contracted circle—the Printer (who on theſe occaſions is a very great man) does not ſo much conſider the importance of a writer's ſubject, as the immediate profit of the partners; it is not the improvement of the reader which he conſults, but the intereſt of the paper, or the topic of the day, and therefore often ſtints the eſſayiſt in room, to advertiſe a parcel of ſtolen goods, or to epitomize the trial of ſome remarkable murderer.

I remember when the BABLER was firſt undertaken, I ſent an eſſay to the preſs, on which I had employed extraordinary pains; and which I warmly imagined would have procured me at leaſt a fortnight's reputation—the ſubject of the eſſay was the abſurdity of party diſtinctions; but unhappily, though I had endeavoured to contract myſelf within the moſt moderate limits, I had ſtill exceeded the prudential bounds

of the Printer;—he accordingly brought me back the manuſcript, and declared it could not poſſibly be inſerted without undergoing ſome conſiderable amputations—It was in vain I argued with him on the importance of the ſubject, the ſpirit of the writing, and the credit it would certainly do his paper—the rogue was incorrigibly dull; and told me if I would have it in, I muſt ſtrike a pen through the *King*, cut out Lord *Bute*, and burn the people of *England*—Theſe conditions were too hard to be complied with—and I rather choſe to leave my admirable eſſay out entirely, than mangle it to the taſte of an unfeeling blockhead, who appeared ſo glaringly callous to the beauties of a maſterly production.

Circumſcribed thus unhappily in my limits, the reader of judgment will not be ſurprized at finding many ſubjects thrown frequently into little hiſtories, which otherwiſe ſituated, I ſhould have attempted to diſcuſs on the methodical principles of a regular argument—As I had not room to enter into elaborate diſquiſitions, it was my buſineſs to give the reader a little entertainment; and my duty at leaſt to amuſe his fancy, ſince I was unable to improve his underſtanding.

The principal matter which the author thinks himſelf under a neceſſity of apologizing for, is the ſimilarity which the reader will find in ſome of the ſubjects; this was a circumſtance which, though the author was well aware it would expoſe him to the cenſure of the judicious, he could not conveniently avoid; as it was impoſſible to deliver himſelf fully on ſome points in a ſingle paper, he was under a neceſſity of reſuming ſuch as were moſt material to be diſcuſſed: he flatters himſelf, however, that he will not be thought extremely reprehenſible on this account, ſince thoſe who are ſatisfied with the mere ſuperficials of a ſubject, may eaſily eſcape the repetitions; while thoſe who expect any information by proceeding, may as eaſily pardon the prolixity. Upon the whole, there is nothing in the volumes now offered to the public, for which the author could not urge ſome palliation; but his excuſes, perhaps, by treſpaſſing on the readers patience, at a time they cannot correct the minuteſt error in his performance, will themſelves ſtand in need of an apology; he will therefore only add, that tenderneſs in criticiſm is the next virtue to generoſity; and that he ſhall ſcarcely feel a greater ſhare of gratitude for thoſe, who kindly diſcover any little merit in the following Eſſays, than for thoſe who benevolently overlook their numerous imperfections.

# THE

# B A B L E R.

## VOLUME THE FIRST.

## Nº I. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12.

THERE is ſcarcely a little Eſſayiſt, now-a-days, who amuſes the world under any particular title, but gives himſelf airs of the greateſt conſequence, and claims ſome degree of affinity with the TATLER and SPECTATOR: indeed, where the itch of reading is nearly equal to the *cacoethes ſcribendi*, a man has no great occaſion to be poſſeſſed of either much genius or education to become a literary legiſlator, and ſet himſelf up as a regulator of the public; the moſt material article of all is, the choice of a tolerable title to attract the attention of the reader; and if this can be happily ſtruck out, learning and abilities are not ſo much as ſecondary conſiderations.

In modern literature, a motto is a matter of no little conſequence; and an author, in the preſent *anno domini*, can no more pretend to circulate his writings without a motto, than without the aſſiſtance of the daily and evening papers: many an induſtrious pedlar, in the ſmall wares of letters, has got off an edition of his pamphlet, without any other recommendation than the name and motto; and alarmed the world with a very terrible title-page, when the contents were as innocent as water-gruel, and inſipid as cold veal without either lemon or ſalt.

In this univerſal purſuit after titles, I do not eſteem myſelf very unhappy in the choice of the BABLER: it is a character under which the generality of mankind are more or leſs diſtinguiſhed, and which is indiſcriminately applicable to all orders and ſituations; different people only differ in the manner, but they are always ſure of agreeing in eſſentials; and the humble mechanic, who harangues for the good of his country over a ſolitary pint of porter, is in fact no more a *Babler*, than a perſonage of diſtinguiſhed rank, who talks about the national importance with all the uſual eaſe and inſipidity of diſtinction and importance. In reality, the great buſineſs of mankind is *babling*; for, if we place the principal happineſs of ſociety in converſation, a very little regard to any company we may happen to ſit with, will convince us that the generality of our acquaintance are nothing more than *Bablers*; ſo very limited is the number which diſcourſes, now-a-days, with any inclination to improve or entertain, that, I dare ſay, my readers will be ſurpriſed when I ſet down ſome of the moſt eminent names in the kingdom among the order of *Bablers*.

The word *Babler* being principally confined to verbal indiſcretion and impertinence,

pertinence, I ſhall employ the remaining part of this eſſay in giving my readers ſuch a particular deſcription of the *Babler*, that they can never be at a loſs in the application of the term when they meet with any of my relations.

Whenever a perſon ſeems extremely earneſt to engroſs the converſation of the company, there can be no manner of doubt that he is a *Babler*.

Whenever a perſon is uncommonly liberal in the payment of unneceſſary compliments, the moſt extenſive degree of good-nature cannot avoid ſetting him down a *Babler*.

Whenever a man is fond of remembering tedious and unentertaining ſtories, and is apt to be put in mind of ſuch and ſuch a particular anecdote by ſome correſponding circumſtance which may caſually ariſe in converſation, that man is, by every manner of means, a *Babler*.

Whenever we ſee a man making an unneceſſary parade of his education, and interlarding his diſcourſe with technical terms, or ſentences not clearly underſtood, in the language of Dogberry—'Set him down a—*Babler*.'

Whenever we find a man fond of repeating his own jokes, and deſirous of telling the *good thing* he ſaid to his friend Jack ſuch-a-one, at ſuch a time—down with him—a *Babler*.

Whenever we ſee any perſon ready to circulate the laugh at the expence of decency and good manners, there is no occaſion to heſitate in pronouncing him a *Babler*.

Whenever we meet with a man diſpoſed to contradict, for no other reaſon but to ſhew the ſuperiority of his own abilities—O! a *Babler*, a *Babler!* And,

When we hear him diſpute upon a ſubject he is totally unacquainted with, who can deny but he is a moſt conſummate *Babler?*

Having thus given the outlines of a *Babler*, any perſon, with a very indifferent pencil, may work up a ſtriking likeneſs of the greateſt number of his acquaintance: for my own part, like the reſt of my brethren, I ſhall ſpeak of men and things as I find myſelf prompted by humour or inclination; the only reſtriction I ſhall lay myſelf under, is ever to have decency and candour in view, and never entirely to loſe ſight of my little judgment and underſtanding. Upon theſe principles I hope to entertain the public; and, ſhould I fail in the attempt, I muſt condole myſelf with a line of my friend Horace—

*Magnis tamen exidit auſis.*

## Nº II. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

IN the variety of courſes which the generality of mankind purſue for the attainment of happineſs, it is not a little ſurpriſing that they ſhould be ſhamefully inattentive in one of the moſt material points that can poſſibly inſure it. The point I mean is, that union of the ſexes which, properly concluded, is the foundation of felicity to individuals, and of ſecurity to the public. Nature has given every parent a power of directing the inclinations of their children, but allows of no unreaſonable authority to force them; and ſuch as have a ſenſible concern for the happineſs of their offspring, ſhould be particularly careful that a reciprocal paſſion ſubſiſted between the parties before they conſented to an inviolable union. The ill-directed tenderneſs of parental affection has often been productive of the moſt unhappy conſequences; and many a father has made his children miſerable for life, by a miſtaken ſolicitude for their welfare, and by making a proviſion for their happineſs which was not in the leaſt eſſential, and for which they had not, in all probability, any manner of occaſion. I am led naturally to this ſubject by a paper now lying before me, the contents of which are here preſented to the reader.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

The wretch who is ſentenc'd to die,
 May eſcape, and leave Juſtice behind;
From his country, perhaps, he may fly,
 But, O!—Can he fly from his mind?

I Am the moſt miſerable of men; and, notwithſtanding it might be more prudent to conceal the cauſe of my affliction, I find an inclination to diſcloſe it in this public manner too ſtrongly to

be resisted. I am a young fellow of five and twenty, Sir; neither deformed in my person, nor, I hope, unhappy in my temper: my fortune is easy, my education liberal; and, I suppose, I am as well calculated to pass in a crowd as the generality of my acquaintance.

About twelve months ago, Sir, I fell passionately in love with a young lady, whose beauty and merit entitled her to a rank much more exalted than what I could raise her to, though she was much my inferior in point of fortune. She was at that time courted by a young gentleman in the law; and matters had actually gone so far, that a day was appointed for the solemnization of the nuptials. All this I was very well informed of; yet, impetuously hurried by the violence of my passion, I disclosed it to the father. He was a man of the world—my circumstances were much better than his intended son-in-law's; and he paid a less attention to the happiness, than he shewed for the advancement of his daughter. Why should I take up your time, Mr. Babler? Maria's match with her former lover was immediately broke off; and the unhappy young lady, who never presumed to disobey her father's commands, was torn from the man of her heart, and married to one she could never love.

I was in hope, Mr. Babler, that a little time, and a tender behaviour on my side, as a man never loved more fondly than myself, would have utterly erased Mr. Bridgegrove from the bosom of my wife, and placed me in his stead. But, had I not been besotted with my love, I might have easily known, that a laudable impression upon the mind of a sensible woman is never to be eradicated: no, Mr. Babler, it is utterly impossible. When a young raw girl, indeed, entertains something like a regard for a man, without knowing the reason of her esteem, it is nothing but a struggle of desire; or, more properly speaking, the wheyiness of inclination, which, in a little time, she laughs at herself, and, as she grows in understanding, easily skims off. But, where a woman of sense has placed her affections on a man of merit, the passion is never to be erased; the more she ponders on his worth, the more reason she has to love him; and she can never cease to think of his perfections, till she is wholly divested of thought.

Unhappily for me, Mr. Babler, this was the case. Mr. Bridgegrove possessed the whole heart of Maria, and, in reality, deserved it: he is, perhaps, the most amiable of men, and, poor fellow, loves her to distraction. I have been now married, Mr. Babler, ten months, and have, I flatter myself, expressed every act of tenderness proper for the lover or the husband, but to no purpose. My wife behaves with the utmost complaisance, is uncommonly solicitous to please, but this conduct is the effect of her good sense, and not the consequence of her love. The little endearing intercourses between husband and wife, are *suffered*, not *enjoyed*; if I complain of her coldness, she assumes an air more gay, and affects to be pleased, though I see the starting tear just bursting from her eye, and know the grief that rankles at her heart. Nay, the more I caress, the more miserable she is made; and I see her generously lamenting that she cannot place her heart upon the man that possesses her hand, and is not utterly unworthy of her esteem. O! Mr. Babler, he must have no delicacy, no feeling, that can bear a circumstance like this unmoved. How am I frequently torn to madness with reflection, even when I have her fastened to my bosom, to think her whole soul is at that very moment running on another man. In her sleep she frequently throws one of her fine arms round my neck, and pronounces the name of Bridgegrove in a manner that distracts me. Our little boy, (for she is lately brought to-bed) instead of a blessing, is another source of anxiety to us both. I over-heard her, yesterday morning, weeping over the child, and crying—'My sweet boy, 'poor Bridgegrove should have been 'your father.' O! Mr. Babler, can any situation be so afflicting as mine?—I have made the most amiable of women for ever wretched, and torn a worthy young fellow from the mistress of his heart. I have brought all my sorrows on myself, with the distressful consideration of having no right to complain. I deserve to be miserable. The man who would meanly hope to be happy in marriage, by sacrificing the inclination of the woman he loves, and ungenerously loses every regard to her wishes, while he endeavours to gratify his own, has

no pretension to felicity. Had I never obtained the possession of Maria, I should not have been half so wretched as I am now: time, and another object, would, perhaps, have enabled me t bear her loss:—but, now master of her person, to find another in possession of her heart, and to know that there is one whom she holds considerably dearer than myself, are considerations absolutely insupportable. I cannot dwell any longer on the subject: I shall therefore conclude with an advice to my own sex, never to marry a woman whose heart they know is engaged, nor to take a pitiful advantage of a father's authority, in opposition to her inclination. If she be a good woman, she can never forget her first choice, and if she be bad, will inevitably bring shame and scandal on the second. I am, Sir, &c.

## Nº III. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

WHEN I first commenced Periodical Essayist, my fears presented a thousand difficulties to my imagination, in the process of my design. I dreamed of incessant application to pen and ink, and of continual visits from those very worthy gentlemen, who are honoured with the appellation of *Devils to the Press*: but my apprehensions were entirely groundless. I no sooner appeared in print, than a whole army of good-natured persons instantly drew up in my favour; amongst the rest the wife of a city man of fashion, who writes to me after the following manner.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a haberdasher's wife, not very far from Cornhill; and though I never received any other education than what the English language could afford me, or made a greater progress in my studies than the Rule of Three Direct; yet I can spell tolerably enough, and, though I say it, 'know a sheep's head 'from a carrot,' as well as Hodge in the new opera.—But, Sir, to the business of my letter.

My husband and I, Sir, are a young couple just set up in business; and, you know, Mr. Babler, as such, ought to be extremely complaisant and respectful to our customers. In the way of trade, every body who lays out a penny with us, is to be considered as our superiors, at least while they stay in our shop:—but my husband, who, it seems, is wiser than I am, is quite of a contrary opinion. He never keeps his hat off a moment in the house, and behaves to every one as if he rather laid them under an obligation by the sale of his own commodities. If a lady steps in to buy a piece of ribband, or a hat, instead of shewing her a variety of things, that may fix her attention, or induce her to make an additional purchase, he talks to her about plays, and about operas: instead of saying—'These, Madam, 'are the best pair of gloves in the kingdom,' he cries out—'To be sure Mr. 'Garrick is the greatest actor in the 'world!' or—'To be sure Miss Brent 'is the finest singer in the universe.' There is no bearing of him, Mr. Babler: the fellow will prate a whole hour about Shakespeare, when he ought to be numbering up his threads; and run himself out of breath in encomiums on Otway, when he ought to be busy in the praise of his handkerchiefs.

But these are trifles, Mr. Babler, when compared to some other instances of his behaviour: why, Sir, he would not rise from dinner to serve the Lady Mayoress. At dinner time, if he is told any person wants him about business:—'D—n it, do they think he'll 'get up from his dinner? Can they find 'no other time to come but when he is 'just sat down at table? Let them wait 'or call again, which ever they think 'proper.' Ah, Mr. Babler, people that are in trade should get up from breakfast, dinner, and supper, to attend the necessary duties of their profession. Those, who have no other dependence, should think themselves happy in being called to their business at dinner time, since it is by that means they are enabled to have any dinner at all. No later than Wednesday last, Sir, this attention to his stomach lost him a country order for a hundred pounds; and even the deputy of our ward was kept waiting yesterday above ten minutes in the shop, though

though he came to diſcharge a little account which was due for his wife and two daughters.

As I am reſolved, now I have begun, Mr. Babler, to let you know all his faults, I muſt inform you he has lately bought a horſe, and paid thirty guineas for this hopeful bargain: this horſe he is to ride out every Sunday if the weather be fine, and he happens to have no engagement. 'Tis odds, Mr. Babler, that he does not find a ride convenient once a month, or that ſomething does not prevent his excurſion even at the end of that period: but, however, let us ſuppoſe that the weather and accidental engagements will permit him to go out one Sunday in four, the ſtabling and provender for his horſe will at leaſt amount to ſeven ſhillings a week; ſo that, every time he takes a ride out, horſe hire will coſt him eight and twenty ſhillings, (not to ſay any thing of the original purchaſe) and for half the money he might get a hackney coach for the whole day, to carry all his family. And here I cannot help reflecting, Mr. Babler, upon this injudicious practice of riding out every Sunday, which ſeems ſo much in faſhion among the generality of our polite citizens. If a tradeſman buys a horſe, and does not ride out every Sunday, his purchaſe becomes uſeleſs, and his money thrown away: if he does, he debars himſelf of every other enjoyment, and cuts himſelf off from the only opportunity he has of attending the public worſhip of God. He is loſt to his family and friends one day in ſeven, and is an alien to his Creator on the moſt ſacred of them all.

Pray, Mr. Babler, print this letter: your writings are much read in our neighbourhood; and my huſband himſelf condeſcends to ſay you are a very ſenſible ſort of a fellow. If you ſhould have any opportunity, I beg you would ſpeak ſomething about the dreſs of tradeſmen; for I have ſome reaſon to think my huſband has actually beſpoke a laced hat, and given the taylor directions to put vellum holes in his next ſuit of cloaths. Do oblige me, dear Mr. Babler; and I ſhall always acknowldge myſelf much your humble ſervant,

WINIFRED TAPELY.

## Nº IV. SATURDAY, MARCH 5.

OF all the enemies to ſociety, there is none which ſhould be held in greater abhorrence than a man of gallantry profeſſed; and yet, in this faſhionable age, it is a character which the generality of our young fellows, and but too many of our old ones, are uncommonly ſolicitous to obtain. But the ſtrongeſt invectives againſt this infamous diſpoſition may not, perhaps, be half ſo ſerviceable as a little ſtory, which a very worthy gentleman of my acquaintance favoured me with laſt night; for which reaſon I ſhall lay aſide declaration, and proceed to my narrative.

Not many weeks ago, at the firſt reduction of our forces, among many other officers who were diſmiſſed, a young lieutenant, one Mr. Franſham, received his diſcharge. As the income of this gentleman's commiſſion, during his continuance in the army, could not ſuffer him to lay by any mighty matters for an emergency, his half-pay would have been but a ſlender ſubſiſtence, had not an old ſchool-fellow of his, one Mr. Harold, a country gentleman, made him a cordial offer of his houſe and table, till he ſhould be fortunately provided for in ſome reputable employ. Mr. Harold was the moſt amiable of men; he had a handſome perſon, a fine underſtanding, an affluent fortune, and a benevolent heart: he had been but newly married to a young lady of whom he was paſſionately fond; and who, if wit and beauty were capable of conſtituting matrimonial felicity, could not fail of making him the moſt happy of men.

Mr. Franſham was one of thoſe people who profeſs a Covent Garden ſort of knowledge; and, like a maggot in a cheeſe, knew no part of the world but the rotten. His converſation was lively, but not improving; and he carried the appearance of much underſtanding, though, in reality, he had but little ſenſe: his company, however, was entertaining enough; he talked of the polite diverſions; told a ſtory tolerably well; and ſung with ſome voice, and much taſte. As the flaſhineſs of his converſation carried the appearance of

wit, Mrs. Harold was not a little pleased with her new visitant; and Mr. Fransham, from the first moment he came into the house, had formed a design of rendering himself as agreeable as possible to her; and, without either being confined by the rules of friendship, or the principles of gratitude, he thought he could not be in reality a fine gentleman without endeavouring to alienate her affections from her husband. To dwell upon the circumstances is unnecessary; he left no art unessayed to gain his point; and, in an evil hour, too fatally succeeded.

Poor Mr. Harold, not in the least suspecting the nature of their intimacy, was really pleased at the countenance shewn to Mr. Fransham by his wife; every mark of complacency shewn to that gentleman, he looked upon as a particular instance of her affection for himself: but one evening, returning from a visit which he had paid alone to a gentleman in his neighbourhood, considerably sooner than he was expected, upon going up to Mrs. Harold's chamber, he found the door locked, and fancied he heard her voice and Mr. Fransham's in a very familiar sort of conversation. An instinctive kind of terror struck instantly to his heart: he knocked at the door; which not being immediately unlocked, he burst it open, and, just as he entered, saw his perfidious friend escape out of the window into the garden. Frantic at this sight, the violence of his passion prevented him from pursuing the infamous villain, by whom he had been so barbarously wronged: he gazed in a violent fit of horror for some time upon his wife, who sat trembling on the bed-side; then running to a case of pistols, which were kept generally in the bed-chamber, he snapped one of them at Mrs. Harold, and ran immediately after to find the partner of her crime; but Mr. Fransham, knowing Mr. Harold's temper too well to stay within his reach, made such good use of his time, that he was quite out of danger before the other began the pursuit.

Happily for Mrs. Harold, the pistol was not charged which was directed at her, though the fright threw her into a swoon: but recovering, and finding herself entirely safe, she thought it most prudent to retire to a friend's house for a little time, till a reconciliation could be effected with her husband. Here she remained for about a month, and tried every means of obtaining his forgiveness, but to no purpose; and the following letter, which he wrote to her in his cooler moments, put a total stop to any future attempts of that nature.

BY what name shall I distinguish you? or how shall I be able to write to a woman with any degree of temper, whom I am born everlastingly to curse and detest? Can you, Maria, be mean enough to think of living with a man whom you have covered with disgrace, or bear the eternal memento which his presence must give you of your own! That I did love—— But wherefore do I dwell upon a circumstance which I must endeavour to obliterate for ever? or mention the sincerity of my passion, when I think upon the reward it has met?

If I expect to be forgiven myself in the next world, Maria, you conjure me to pardon your offences in this. What a wretch must the man be who excuses a crime which the eye of all acquitting Mercy cannot look upon without horror! If there are particular crimes which we are taught to believe Heaven itself will not pardon, can we suppose that there are not injuries which it is impossible for human nature ever to over-look?—Forgive you, Maria!—oh that I could! My anguish would not be of that poignant nature which it is, could the baseness of your conduct ever be forgot. See me!—No. Fly me as far as earth can part us; for should we once meet, I will not answer but that moment may be our last. As for the villain!—I cannot name him!—to the most distant corner of the world I'll pursue him; he shall be an eternity a dying: and yet if he feels half of what I suffer, hell itself cannot possibly afflict him more. Distraction choaks me, I cannot proceed. If adultery!—if the violation of the most solemn vows given in the immediate presence of the living God, is pardonable above—I will not pray for your perdition. But should you again urge my temper by an insolent application for my pity, in some bitter moment of my soul, perhaps, I may be provoked to supplicate that the Divine Goodness may be as far from you as the compassion of the wretched

FRANCIS HAROLD.

The

The sequel of the story is—Mrs. Harold, through shame and remorse, is pining at the house of a relation in the country, and supposed to be in a very declining situation. As for Fransham, he escaped over into France; but falling into a number of excesses, reduced himself to the necessity of the road; but being apprehended in his first robbery, will, in all probability, if he escapes death, be confined during life to the gallies. Mr. Harold is grown more composed, and all his friends are busied in keeping up his spirits, and with such success, that it is hoped in a little time his tranquillity will be restored, especially as they all carefully avoid mentioning a single syllable of Mrs. Harold. We may conclude our little narrative with a few lines from Rowe's Fair Penitent—

By these examples are we taught to prove
What sad effects attend unlawful love.
Death, or some worse mischance, will soon divide
The wretched bridegroom from his guilty bride.
If you would have the nuptial union last,
Let virtue be the bond that ties it fast.

## N° V. SATURDAY, MARCH 12.

IT was a common expression of the late Bolingbroke's, that if he was but an hour in the company of a stranger, and heard him speak but fifty words, he could tell the particular turn or bias of his temper. When I consider the general propensity of mankind to enhance the idea of their own characters, and reflect that there is a particular something in the opinion of every man which gives him an advantage over the rest of the world, I am inclined to believe that his lordship's declaration is not altogether so extraordinary as a person at first might possibly imagine it.

In people of understanding, the particular quality upon which they principally value themselves, is rather easier to be discovered than in those of ordinary capacities, because conversation taking a more liberal turn, furnishes a greater number of opportunities to draw it out. I was last night sitting with two or three friends, who are not a little esteemed in the literary world, when I immediately reflected upon Lord Bolingbroke's observation. One of them opened the discourse with a compliment to the abilities of Mr. Pope, and seemed intent to make that celebrated author the subject of conversation. Poetry he talked of as the first of all the sciences; and consequently hinted, that such as excelled in this were superior to the most eminent professors of any other. It is almost needless to tell, that my friend has himself published some pieces in this way of writing, which are universally admired; and that, while he was expatiating on the merit of Mr. Pope, he had a secret intention of reminding us of his own character. This gentleman, though a very sensible man, carries his zeal for the poetic Muse a little too far: he looks upon every one with an eye of indifference who has not received some marks of that lady's favour; and very lately refused a woman of ten thousand pounds, who was passionately in love with him, for no other reason in life than because she left the room, about some domestic occurrence, while he was reading an imitation of one of Horace's odes, which he had written, it seems, that morning.

My poetical friend entertained us for some time; when a mathematical acquaintance turned the discourse upon Sir Isaac Newton: in a little time my good friend Dr. Nettletop beat Sir Isaac out of the field with Boerhaave; Mr. Longwind, the historian, however, quickly conquered Boerhaave with Rapin; and the wide field of history itself was not long after covered by Mr. Choleric, the politician, with the triumphs of his immortal King of Prussia.

But if so great a fondness of shewing the particular qualification wherein we excel, though it be a meritorious one, is deserving of our censure, how much more to be condemned are those sort of people, who build their reputation upon trifles of the most ridiculous nature, and are constantly taking up the time of every company they are admitted into, with recitals of no consequence to themselves, and no entertainment to any body else. My cousin Jack Babler gives me great offence this way: Jack particularly piques himself upon a very small stomach, and an unconquerable aversion to a buttock of beef. Hence,

wherever he goes, we are always ſure of a diſſertation upon eating: the ſmallneſs of his appetite is a never-failing ſource of converſation; and I have known him to take up two hours and a half to convince a large company that he has not eat a pound of meat in a fortnight. If by a revolution in his habit of body my poor couſin ſhould unfortunately get a good ſtomach, he muſt reſign all pretenſion to merit, and baniſh himſelf from ſociety for the want of common converſation.

But the moſt extraordinary character I ever knew, that was not abſolutely vicious, is my friend Sir Harry Whimſey's. Sir Harry has underſtanding, and yet he only uſes it to be a fool; he has a fortune capable of providing all the pleaſures of life, and yet he is never happy till he is compleatly miſerable. Sir Harry, if he happens to be indiſpoſed, is a little eaſy in his mind; but if he be really ill, it is then he experiences the higheſt ſatisfaction; his friends are all ſummoned, and with an air of the utmoſt conſequence told of his melancholy ſituation; how the pain in his head has torn him to pieces, and how he has not had a wink of ſleep for three nights. When he finds any concern expreſſed for his condition, his pride begins to ſwell, and the notion of his own importance increaſes, in proportion to the pity of his friends, and the danger of his diſorder. He has been a man of very little merit, however, theſe three years; for, being naturally of a good conſtitution, and not much addicted to intemperance of any nature, he has unhappily eſcaped the ſmalleſt indiſpoſition.

The knowledge of theſe foibles in other people is of no advantage to us, unleſs they teach us to correct whatever may be amiſs of the ſame nature in ourſelves: the beſt of us have our little abſurdities; for which reaſon, when we laugh at the peculiarities of our acquaintance, we ſhould by no means neglect an examination into our own.

## Nº VI. SATURDAY, MARCH 19.

AT a time when the whole kingdom is running mad with political diſquiſitions, it would be ſomething hard if the Babler was not allowed to dwell upon the ſubject; but as he is very unlike the generality of his name-ſakes, and dreads nothing ſo much as offending, he declares himſelf publicly a lover of truth, yet an advocate of no party, and ſets up for the title of a good Engliſhman without being either a Whig or a Tory. Party diſtinctions are to him the moſt diſguſting circumſtances imaginable; and an intemperate zeal in the ſupport of any faction, not only the moſt ridiculous commotion in ſociety, but the moſt dangerous.

Sir Robert Walpole, who knew human nature as well as moſt people, has been very open and very honeſt upon this ſubject. I have a letter of his this moment before me, which has never yet appeared in print, and which will, I dare ſay, be no leſs a curioſity than an inſtruction to my readers. Sir Robert, I need not obſerve, had been for a long time the idol of the people, and was even committed to the Tower for too ſtrenuous an aſſertion of their liberties. After his intereſt had got the better of his patriotiſm, and that the fondneſs of fame had yielded to a paſſion for power, Sir Robert wrote the following letter to an intimate friend, who had reproached him for deſerting the welfare of the public.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I Received your laſt with much ſatiſfaction, though it contained ſome little acrimony on my conduct, and eaſily diſcovered the greatneſs of your eſteem, notwithſtanding it was blended ſo frequently with reproof.

Indeed, my dear friend, whatever colour my change of principles may wear, or however it may be conſidered by the generality of people, I have done nothing which every other man in the world would not have done in my ſituation. The very beſt of us are fond of greatneſs and power in our hearts; and however we may ſeem to deſpiſe either, the contempt never laſts a moment longer than the incapacity to obtain them. The friendſhip of a king, the command of his revenues, an opportunity of promoting our friends, and triumphing over our enemies, let me tell

you,

you, are considerations of no very trifling nature; and the man, in my opinion, must be something more or less than human, wherever they are resisted. As I have not vanity sufficient to pretend to the first, I have sense enough to avoid the imputation of the latter; and am content with being nothing more than mortal, provided there are no malicious endeavours to make me any thing less.

Popularity, my dear friend, is nothing more than a step-ladder for ambition to reach the summit of place and preferment. We all have our prices; and if it is asked why I continued so long in an opposition to the court, my answer is this, they did not come up to mine. There is scarcely a member whose price I do not know to a single sixpence, and whose very soul I could not almost purchase at the first offer. The reason former ministers have been deceived in this matter is evident; they never considered the tempers of the people they had to deal with. I have known ministers so weak as to offer an avaricious rascal a star and garter; and to think of bribing a profuse young rogue, who set no value upon money, with a lucrative employment. I pursue methods as opposite as the poles, and consequently my administration must be attended with very different effects.

The people of England are, in general, a set of hot-headed fools, a parcel of sensible coxcombs, who, though perfectly able to examine the bottom of things, never judge farther than the surface. They know their rights and privileges inviolably safe, and yet they are never easy unless they think them in danger. It is no way difficult, therefore, for an aspiring commoner to take an advantage of this disposition, and to convert their ignorant solicitude for the public emolument entirely to the promotion of his own. A staunch opposition on two or three questions, right or wrong, to the court, gets him a name; half a dozen impudent unmeaning speeches, the admiration; and a treasonable pamphlet, the very souls of the people. Patriotic barbers toast him in ale-houses, public-spirited shoemakers harangue for him in the streets, and free-born chairmen and house-breakers sing forth his praises in every night-cellar within the bills of mortality. To quiet the minds of the mob, he gets a place. His own interest then obliges him to join the measures of the court. Upon this, the golden idol turns instantly to a calf, and leaves the field of preferment to somebody else, who is next to share the admiration, and, in due time, the curses of the vulgar. I remember I never thought my point compleatly carried till they clapped me in the Tower. I looked upon myself then as a made man, and the event fully justified the warmth of my expectations. In reality, I know no better friends to the constitution of this country, was it any way in danger, than this set of imaginary patriots: they struggle very heartily while they are at it, and the moment they are bought off, their preferment inspires others with a view of following their example, in order by the same means to attain the same ends; and thus we always find a succession of zealous patriots, who constantly advance the good of their country, by being so very strenuous about their own. But, to drop this subject, know, my dear friend, that the constitution of this country is so critically founded, that whatever affects the privileges of the people will, in a little time, endanger the prerogative of the crown: there is no separate interest for either to consult; and, in such a case, no man of sense will dream that the court can have the least notion of encroaching on the liberties of the subject.

You see, my dear friend, how freely I deal with myself; but, with me, patriotism goes for nothing. There is not this moment one patriot in the house; nor, indeed, is there the least necessity that there should. Do not deprive me of your good opinion for my candour, but go on to esteem me, and be assured I shall ever remain your most faithful friend,

R. WALPOLE.

## N° VII. SATURDAY, MARCH 26.

THE subject of my correspondent's letter in a former number, has procured me a very sensible complaint from an honest buckle-maker near Cornhill; and as it may serve by way of supplement, I think it most proper not to postpone the publication of it.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE remarks which were made upon the dress of tradesmen, especially those of the younger sort, in your paper, from a correspondent I cannot help admiring very much; and the more so, as they come home to an instance in my own family, which has for a long time given me no little uneasiness.

You must know, Mr. Babler, that I am a plain pains-taking man, and neither more or less than a buckle-maker, near Cornhill: I have kept shop these twenty years, and brought up my family, consisting of a wife, one son, and a daughter, decently enough, though I say it myself; and, may be, have saved a trifle or so in my business; but that does not signify.

As every thing I have has been made by a close application to trade, I do not chuse appearing grander, Mr. Babler, than what becomes a person of my station; so that I confine myself to a suit or two of modest cloaths, and never put on my largest wig or my best ruffled shirt but of a Sunday. My wife, however, who had been formerly a lady's maid in the city, has higher notions; and as I do not chuse to quarrel with her, indulges herself in the gratification of them to as ridiculous a degree as my circumstances can allow. She would not come into the shop for the world without a sack or a French night-cap; and is sometimes so loaded with powder and pomatum, that the very smell is enough to take away the breath of my customers. I am never suffered to walk with her of a *working* day, because I am not sufficiently fine; nay, I am to esteem it as no trifling favour, if I am permitted to accompany her to the White Conduit House, or Islington fields, of a Sunday. You may be sure, Mr. Babler, that so hopeful an example has not escaped my children without imitation. My daughter, who is about nineteen, will put up with no less an appellation than *a young lady*; and my son, of course, thinks himself equally justified in supporting the title of *a young gentleman*: he quarrelled with my eldest apprentice the other morning for calling him by the familiar name of *Andrew*; and my daughter insisted upon turning away our last maid, because, in speaking of her to a third person, she did not say *Miss Dolly*. My wife's foolish indulgence is a still greater means of spoiling them. My daughter is always dressed out in a manner that renders her above doing any necessary article in the œconomy of a house, and superior to the condescension of serving in the shop. If a customer comes in, instead of asking what he wants, she orders the boy to call *his master*; for she would not stoop to send for *her father* to haggle about a twelve-penny knife, or a two-shilling pair of buckles. If she sits behind the counter, it is with a look of dignity and importance; and, to every new comer-in, puts on a new air, in order to enhance the idea of her consequence. My wife has lately bought her a pair of stone shoe-buckles; and I am hourly teazed to death about purchasing her a metal watch. My son, Mr. Babler, is not a whit less affected than my daughter. I cannot see in what respect he is any way my superior; and yet, through his mother's means, he appears in a manner I never durst assume without being laughed at by all my acquaintance. He has his ruffled shirt on every day, and clean white stockings; has actually got a silk waistcoat with vellum button holes, and a gold-laced hat, for Sundays. Is there any bearing this, Mr. Babler? But this is not the worst of it: as he improves in dress, the more he decreases in his manners; and the better he is supplied with the articles of finery, the less respectful he grows to those who provide him with the means. Lord, Sir! he considers me in no better light than a sort of an upper servant, who is obliged to consult the gratification of his pleasures, and to humour every turn and

and whim of his inclination. He ſcarce ever takes his hat off before me; and is ſo far from thinking that there is any thing out of character in his dreſs, that he is always exclaiming againſt the poverty of mine. In this he is ſupported both by his mother and his ſiſter, the former always declaring I ſhame them with my naſty way of appearing, and my dutiful daughter wondering how her papa can dreſs in ſo ſhabby and pitiful a manner. We are talked of all over the neighbourhood, Mr. Babler; and I am for ever rated at the Blue Poſts for ſubmitting to my wife's dominion in my family. Print this, pray do; ſhame may produce better effects than reaſon; and if it but makes my wife concerned at her behaviour, I ſhall poſſibly have every right to call myſelf yours,

ANDREW ANCHOR.

## Nº VIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 2.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

MINISTERIAL advocates having, in the preſent political diſpute, taken a number of liberties themſelves, which they utterly condemn in other people; and exclaimed with uncommon energy againſt invective, at a time they were dealing out the moſt virulent abuſe; I ſhall, for the entertainment of your readers, Mr. Babler, give a ſort of *Political Dictionary*, in which their principal terms ſhall be explained, and in which I ſhall religiouſly confine myſelf to the ideas they always annex to each particular epithet, as it occurs in the courſe of their writings or converſation.

*Diſaffection to the king.*] Whatever points out the grievances of the people, and endeavours to remove a weak or wicked miniſter.

*A ſower of ſedition.*] One who tells honeſt truths, and is above the reach of miniſterial influence and corruption.

*The licentiouſneſs of the preſs.*] The candid method of repreſenting the ſufferings of the kingdom, and the ſpeedieſt means of having them redreſſed.

*The mob.*] The Dukes of Devonſhire, Grafton, Portland, and Newcaſtle; the Marquis of Rockingham; the Earls Temple, Hardwick, Beſborough, Aſhburnham, &c. &c. the Lords Dudley, Monſon, Sondes, &c. &c. Mr. William Pitt, Mr. James Grenville, Sir George Savile, Mr. Beckford, &c. &c.

*An upright miniſter.*] Lord Bute.

*A man of ſuperior excellence and virtue.*] Ditto.

*The firmeſt friend of the ſovereign.*] Ditto.

*The trueſt lover of his country.*] Ditto.

*An advantageous peace.*] Unneceſſary conceſſions to our enemies, and putting them again in a capacity of cutting our throats.

*An honourable peace.*] Submitting to the demands of an enemy we had conquered; and reſigning, without indemnification, what we had purchaſed with a profuſion of treaſure and blood.

*A good ſubject.*] A man with a bare backſide, and a lover of the itch.

*Prudence and œconomy.*] An increaſe of taxes at the concluſion of an expenſive war; and a laviſhing that treaſure upon profligate favourites, which ſhould be applied to diſcharge the public debts of the kingdom.

*The faith of the nation.*] A deſertion of the King of Pruſſia, our ally, at a time that France had made ſtipulations in favour of his moſt immediate enemies.

*The encouragement of genius.*] A proviſion for Hume, Home, Mallock, and other Scotch writers, who had drawn their pens in favour of a Scotch miniſter.

*Subverſion of the conſtitution.*] To prevent the machinations of tyranny and deſpotiſm, and to maintain the purity of the laws and the liberty of the ſubject.

*Oeconomy.*] A pitiful manner of furniſhing the royal kitchen, and a profuſe method of expending the money of the kingdom.

*Contempt of the oppoſition.*] A ſilence when uncontrovertible facts are advanced, and a proſecution where any thing is uttered contrary to the chicanery of the laws, however juſt it may be in reaſon.

*Miniſterial*

*Ministerial moderation.*] A discharge of every person put into office during the administration of the Duke of Newcastle, or Mr. Pitt, not even excepting a fifty pound salary.

*Laws agreeable to the constitution.*] Acts which are passed by ministerial influence, and have an immediate tendency to encroach upon the freedom and property of the subject.

*The sense of the kingdom.*] The dictates of an arbitrary and all-grasping minister, and the despicable arguments of his mercenary advocates.

*Liberty and property.*] A forcible entry of our houses by messengers at midnight, and an imprisonment of our persons without either information or evidence.

*The good of the public.*] A destructive excise-bill, and an arbitrary manner of levying taxes, without any shadow of pretence, or colour of necessity.

*A bloody and expensive war.*] The exercise of a just revenge upon our enemies, and the reduction of settlements which would amply reimburse our expence, if we had but spirits or understanding to have kept them.

*Prudence and humanity.*] A mean submission to the offers of an enemy reduced; and a pitiful apprehension of a reverse of fortune, when that enemy, so far from being in a condition of attacking us, was utterly incapable of defending himself.

*Justice and impartiality.*] A captain's commission to a child of not ten years old, while many who had ventured their lives in the service of their country were perishing for bread.

*Reward of merit.*] Places and pensions to such as had scandalously sold the interest of their country, and supported the tyranny of a presumptuous minister.

*Scandal and detraction.*] A regard for the name of Englishman, and an aversion to the itch.

*Arrogance and presumption.*] The smallest dissent from the opinion of an insolent Scot, and a refusal of that implicit submission to an over-bearing minister, which was never expected nor desired by his master.

*Aversion to popularity.*] An affected contempt in a minister for a people, by whom he was conscious of being justly and generally despised.

*A regard for the dignity of the Crown.*] A poor pretence for practising the most detestable means to trample on the liberties of the people.

*Ministerial resignation.*] A fallacious method of escaping from the hatred of the public, and an artful contrivance in a favourite to make others *responsible for measures* which are guided by himself.

*A man above avarice.*] One who affects a total disregard for money; but, however, procures the most lucrative places for himself, and raises his beggarly relations over the heads of the deserving to the first offices of the kingdom.

*A man of the utmost wisdom and virtue.*] A minister who embroils a whole kingdom in dangerous dissensions, and treads upon that people who taught him the difference between penury and affluence; the distinction between opulence the most splendid, and indigence the most extreme.

*Decency and candour.*] A submission to the arrogant commands of a haughty, and an approbation of the destructive measures of a worthless, favourite.

*An enemy to his country.*] Any person in the least solicitous to preserve it from destruction.

## Nº IX. SATURDAY, APRIL 9.

I Do not know any thing in the present age which has done such essential disservice to the cause of virtue and morality as the ridiculous affectation of wit, which prevails in almost every order of the people. Under a pretension to this quality, the most blameable levities become universally admired; and, what is much worse, the most dangerous of all our vices are set up as a standard for public imitation. To destroy the tranquillity of a deserving friend by some occasional stroke of impertinence, is, now-a-days, sufficient foundation for the character of a wit; and we frequently reckon that person as possessed of extraordinary abilities, who bids defiance to the mandates of his God.

There

There is one great unhappineſs attending this propenſity to faſhionable wit; which is, that men of the beſt ſenſe very often think themſelves obliged to give in to the general opinion of their acquaintance; and, in order to merit the eſteem of the world, ſubmit to the very errors which their own underſtanding muſt naturally lead them to condemn. Among the number of my own friends who are unhappily victims to the world in this reſpect, I cannot, without the utmoſt concern, reflect upon poor Ned Frailby.

When Ned came from the univerſity, which was at the age of nineteen, he had a doating old grandmother, who ſupplied him plentifully with money, and by whoſe fondneſs he was enabled to indulge all the luxurious depravities incident to his years. Upon his firſt coming to town, he was introduced as a hopeful young fellow at a ſociety of wits, who frequented a faſhionable coffee-houſe in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. Unacquainted with the world, their manners were perfectly new to our young adventurer; and it was not without infinite pain he heard obſcenity and execration form the principal part of the firſt night's diſcourſe. Notwithſtanding this, there was a ſomething in the company which produced an involuntary attachment; and he was overheard whiſpering to the friend who introduced him, that it was a pity ſuch and ſuch gentlemen were not leſs immoral, for he looked upon them as exceſſively agreeable.

There is, in the human mind, a natural promptitude of imitating manners wherever we happen to like a man. This was poor Ned's caſe; in leſs than a week an oath was not altogether ſo ſhocking; and it was rather too reſerved for a young fellow to baniſh an innocent freedom in talking of women, that ſuited with his years and conſtitution. There is no neceſſity for circumſtantial particularities; ſuffice it, that Ned, before the month was over, grew paſſionately fond of the character of a *wit*; and ſhewed, that in purchaſing ſo honourable an appellation, he was utterly regardleſs of the means.

The firſt ſtroke of wit that procured him any reputation, was the overturning of his grandmother's coach in a little excurſion to Richmond, where he inſiſted on mounting the coach-box, and commencing driver. Our Phaeton, unable to manage the horſes, drove againſt a mile-ſtone, upon which the carriage inſtantly gave a violent jerk, and pitched him headlong into a cucumber-bed on the road-ſide, where he was miſerably cut with the glaſſes: the good old lady had her arm broke by the accident; and, what with the acuteneſs of the pain, and her terrors for her Neddy, a fever enſued, which carried her off in a fortnight. When he was able to come abroad, his next ſally of wit was upon an unfortunate waiter, whoſe eye he knocked out with the head of a tobacco-pipe: this coſt him two hundred pounds to ſuppreſs a proſecution, excluſive of a twenty pound annuity during the life of the ſufferer. A duel with a Highland officer, for ſome reflections on brimſtone, was his next exploit; after which he ſucceſſively bred four riots at the playhouſe, and carried off ſeven milliners apprentices within the purlieus of Covent Garden. It is remarkable, that when our modern men of wit endeavour at a character, they generally employ themſelves in proving their ſpirit; and the moment they arrive at the pitch of *doing* what they think proper, the itch of heroiſm naturally diſappears, and they content themſelves with *ſaying* what they pleaſe. This is exactly Ned's caſe; finding the reputation of his courage ſufficiently eſtabliſhed, he reſts ſatisfied with diſturbing every converſation he overhears, and has humility enough to be no more than very impertinent whenever he engages in an argument. At the playhouſe I have heard him affect a horſe-laugh in the moſt diſtreſſing paſſage of a tragedy; and at a concert I never knew him pleaſed with the performers till he had put them entirely out. Fatigued with this inſipid round, his wit has taken a different turn; religion, and it's members, are now the objects of his ridicule; and poſſibly, from ſome paſſages in his life, having reaſon to fear that there is another world after this, he always endeavours to convince his acquaintance that there is not. Unhappy Ned Frailby, ſetting out a faſhionable wit, he has ſunk into a real infidel; and, to gain the admiration of a blockhead he ſhould deſpiſe, has forfeited the favour of his God. The people who wiſh him beſt can only pity him; but where he is not perſonally known, he is looked upon

as what he is: yet Ned has a thousand good qualities; his ear is never turned from the complaint of sorrow, nor his bounty with-held from the tear of distress: he is the best of masters, the kindest of landlords, and the warmest of friends. He has a fine fancy, a sound understanding, and a benevolent heart; but a passion for admiration has undone him, and he is an amiable reprobate at best.

To such a picture there needs no comment: let any man of wit clap his hand upon his heart, and examine if he has not all of Ned's bad qualities; and then let him try how far they are extenuated by the good. If, upon examination, he should appear to have a great deal of the first, and very little of the latter, he is really a very wretched being; and we may very fairly cry out, with the poet—

*Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto.*

## Nº X. SATURDAY, APRIL 16.

THE following letter, which has been communicated by a personage of the first distinction, having something in it so applicable to the present times, we fancy our readers will, for that reason, readily accept it for the entertainment of the day, were they even to pay no regard to the extraordinary merit and uncommon reputation of the author.

### ORIGINAL LETTER

### FROM DEAN SWIFT TO MR. POPE.

(NEVER BEFORE MADE PUBLIC.)

DEAR POPE,

I Am wonderfully pleased with the publication of your Ethic Epistles, not only on account of their poetical and moral excellence, but on account of that hearty aversion to Ministers and Courts, which breathes through several of the passages: perhaps I am the more taken with your sentiments on this head, because they are a sufficient authority for some opinions advanced by myself; and, you know, we are always certain of allowing other people's notions to be of weight and importance when they bear any conformity to our own.

I do not know how it is, but I never liked a Minister in all my days. Our friends Oxford and Bolingbroke I had a sincere value for in their private stations; but in their public capacities I looked upon them both (and you know I have said it to their faces) as little better than a couple of r—ls. This regard to their abstracted merit as individuals, has frequently led me to support tenets diametrically opposite to my principles; and I have often engaged as a champion for the conduct of the ministers, because I had a cordial affection for the integrity of the men. There is such an honest openness in Harley, and so apparent an ingenuousness in St. John, that I am attached to their interest in spite of my teeth, and lest, while I labour to rescue them from the name of scoundrels in their offices, to sink under the weight of the damn'd appellation myself.

In fact, Pope, I believe it impossible for any minister to be an honest man. There are fifty thousand trap-doors, from the very nature of his office, in which it is next to impossible but his integrity must tumble. One right honourable r—l or other has eternally some strumpet to provide for, or some cuckold to recommend, in preference to the claims of real worth, and the pretensions of the truly deserving; not to mention any thing of a minister's own friends, his implements and dependants, who all naturally expect to be provided for in course. Thus situated, a man at the head of affairs is obliged very frequently to overlook the solicitations of services and merit, as I have this moment observed, and exposes himself to the resentment of many disappointed levee-danglers, from an utter impossibility to provide for all. Hence a number of enemies are certain of attacking him at every quarter; and, as the battery in some places may be justly enough levelled, the report must be heard without end.

But as wealth and power are always sure of finding advocates, we never see a minister without a number of literary mercenaries employed in his defence, to refute

refute the arguments of malice, or to evade the accusations of truth; to knock on the head with the hammer of plump contradiction, or to puzzle by a fallacious representation of facts. These worthy gentlemen, did they really consider the true interest of the minister, would never endeavour at any thing like a fair dispute. A round lye ought to be given to every assertion prejudicial to his reputation; and this would produce such a number of replies, that the public would soon give up the discussion of a point which saddled them with a heavy expence. A swarm of pamphlets the lower orders have not the ability to purchase, and the higher have not the leisure to read: hence a debate that occasions a number of publications must insensibly die away, and the principal sufferer be the unfortunate bookseller; for seldom, very seldom, has the proprietoryship of a six-penny touch fallen to the share of *any regularly-bred* author.

People may talk what they will of the infringement which ministerial artificers have made upon the liberty of the subject, but in my opinion the Stamp Office is the most dangerous; the duty laid there upon all publications, is a flagrant attack upon the liberty of the press; and by choaking up the only channel which the public have of setting forth their grievances, cuts off the most probable means of having them redressed: it is, in fact, the most masterly stroke of ministerial cunning which I can remember; for let a secretary be never so bad a man, one half of his villainy passes the notice of the world, because few people are willing to buy a knowledge of it at an exorbitant price.

The general plea which is used by ministerial advocates, and a plea which I myself have used with success, is, that an attack upon the minister is an affront upon the crown; and that there is no accusation laid at the door of a secretary, that is not an indirect reflection upon the king. This is a pleasant way of reasoning, to be sure; for, by the express declaration of our laws, an English prince is a piece of royal infallibility, incapable of doing wrong: as this position is universally admitted, it must consequently follow, that let us spatter as we please, not a bit of dirt can stick upon the monarch; or even if it could, would the monarch be an honest or a sensible man, to be offended, if it was apparently evident he was in the wrong? Duty and reverence is all stuff, Pope; the prince who is offended at censure, ought never to furnish a cause for it; and the king who would exact the obedience, ought to deserve the affection, of his people. This is the voice of reason; and the prince who is above listening to it, may possibly be feared; but I'll stake my salvation that he never can be loved.

The position that a king can do no wrong, Pope, must either tax the English nation with great injustice, or great inconsistency. If a king can do no wrong, why was King James the Second banished? And if a king can do wrong, why the plague are we constantly affirming that he *cannot?* Either way we stand self-condemned: in the first place, we must be very wicked men, if the position holds; and very foolish ones in the second, if it does not. But inconsistency is our prevailing characteristic; and if we are not set down as a nation of scoundrels, we must think ourselves pretty easy under the appellation of fools. I am, dear Pope, &c.

J. SWIFT.

## Nº XI. SATURDAY, APRIL 23.

AMONG the variety of correspondents who favour me with their pieces, a humourous gentleman has sent me the following little narrative, by way of Essay on Happiness, which I shall make no apology for laying before my readers.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I AM going to advance a position which the whole world has been intimate with, since it's first creation; yet, what is not a little odd, a position that one half of our modern authors think as

as necessary to discuss, three or four times a week, as if we were under the greatest doubt of it's truth, or utterly unacquainted with it's rectitude. This position, Sir, is neither more nor less than the imperfection of all human enjoyments, and the just disregard which should be shewn to every possession of this life, by such as have a proper solicitude for the happiness of the next.

I am an old fellow, Master Babler, very near sixty-five; and when I look back upon the various occurrences of life, and recollect the objects which principally attracted my attention from the cradle to the present hour, I cannot help crying out with the poet—

A phantom of pleasure, like happiness drest,
From the cradle we're taught to pursue;
Yet our hope is but vanity, take it at best,
And our wisdom but vanity too.

When I was about ten years of age, Sir, the *summum bonum* of all worldly felicity was a holiday from school, and a pennyworth of marbles. How have I envied a chimney-sweeper's apprentice basking in the sun, in all the amplitude of idleness and rags, when I considered him as unrestrained by the tyranny of some surly pedagogue, or enabled to cry, 'Fair up,' at a game of *slap*. As I grew up, Sir, my attention was imperceptibly engaged to amusements, rather more manly, but, however, less innocent. Many a good time have I been diverted by fastening a rope across our street in a dark night, to tumble unsuspecting passengers in the dirt; and many a cat have I tied to the knocker of a street-door, to throw the first servant wench into fits, by whom it might be occasionally opened: the more mischief on these pretty little frolicks, the better amusement; and I remember never to have received so much real satisfaction, as being the cause in one night of an old woman's eye being scratched half out, and a man's breaking his leg.

At seventeen, however, I began to look on amusements of this nature with an eye of disgust; my time was now wholly taken up with an attendance upon every little girl in our neighbourhood; and between that age and twenty-five I had the happiness of ruining nineteen. You can by no means conceive the transports I felt, Mr. Babler, to survey so many victims to my personal merit and address: often has my heart exulted at the tears of some poor deluded innocent, my satisfaction being always good-naturedly proportioned to the distress which I caused; and once I looked upon myself as the happiest of all human beings, three young ladies with whom I had been particular, being fortunately discarded on that account by their friends, and turned out of doors.

At thirty, Sir, I was married to a woman whose person was far from being agreeable, but whose fortune had too many charms to be withstood. My ambition now was directed to the purchase of a fine stud of cattle, and a magnificent country-house. My wishes were gratified; but in less than three months I sold off the one, and seldom put my foot into the other, unless some very extraordinary circumstance indeed made my appearance absolutely necessary on the spot.

The mutability of my pleasures still continuing, Sir, I was successively fond of the reputation of a hard drinker, the character of a desperate rider, the fame of a good marksman, the glory of a billiard player, and once was miserable a whole twelve-month on account of losing a rubber at Dutch Pins. I have eat a raw beef-steak out of pride, whistled for a wager with a very honest butcher in Newgate Market, and thought it a piece of heroism to be locked up all night with the remains of a murderer, dissected by the surgeons. In short, Sir, there is scarcely a fashionable article of reputation that I have not acquired; but the hey-day of the spirits being long since over, and reason beginning to reflect upon pursuits which nature is no longer able to continue, I look upon every former object of my admiration with a real concern, and an insuperable contempt: and yet, Sir, at this age I have my enjoyments, which I cannot help pursuing with an avidity truly ridiculous. I pique myself not a little on smoaking half a dozen pipes of an evening; and have lately contended for the honour of being the best politician at our club, in a long argument with Doctor Dozely the parson about *Magna Charta*, and the natural rights of a free-born Englishman. Yet, Sir, is all this blaze of reputation worth living for? I blush to be diverted by such trifles, but can by no means throw them off.

off. I am, in short, a convincing proof, Sir, of Solomon's sensible observation—'that all is vanity and vexation of 'spirit;' being perfectly sensible that no happiness, or enjoyment of this life, can be at all equal to conscious satisfaction of preparing for the unutterable transports of the next.

I am, Sir,

THOMAS GIDDY.

## Nº XII. SATURDAY, APRIL 30.

UNIVERSAL soever as the spirit of amour may be, and great soever as the countenance may be which it receives from the polite world, there is no one source from which such a number of calamities are produced, nor any one spring which pours in such a variety of misfortunes upon society. Unhappily, in this gay age, the depravity of manners has arisen to so enormous a degree, that it is in some measure necessary for a young fellow to give into the fashionable follies, and practise vices to which he has a real abhorrence, if he would establish the character of a man of taste, or shew himself tolerably well acquainted with the world.

In the prosecution of modern amour, more than in any other vice, there are allurements which very few think themselves capable of resisting, or even chuse to resist, if they could. A man finds his vanity tickled, as well as his inclination gratified, in the seduction of unwary innocence; and, abstracted from the transport resulting from possession itself, the generality of our sex think, with an infinity of satisfaction, upon their own accomplishments, and suppose they must be possessed of some extraordinary qualifications, when a woman shews her sensibility of them at no less a price than her everlasting disgrace.

The same vanity which impels the one sex to a pursuit of unwarrantable amour, is the very reason why the other is so seldom offended, when they even know that a man's design is repugnant to honour and virtue. The pleasure arising from the adoration paid to a pretty face, casts a veil over the infamous intention of him who offers it; and the generality of women are content to be addressed upon the footing of strumpets, provided the offence which is offered to the purity of their hearts is mingled with a well-turned compliment to the beauty of their persons. Hence, actuated by vanity, and perhaps rendered weak from constitution, the amiable idiot of the softer sex is immediately undone, and the remorseless libertine of ours feels no compunction in the ruin of her character, since the monstrous depravity of general opinion induces him to consider it as an enhancement of his own. Nay, this vanity on the side of the ladies has sometimes been so unaccountably absurd, that two sisters have quarrelled about the addresses of an agreeable spoiler; and contended, with an inflexible sedulity, for the honour of sacrificing their peace of mind in this world, and endangering their everlasting happiness in the next.

Independent of the lamentable consequences in point of character, which on the woman's part most commonly attend a deviation from virtue, the effects which such a deviation has upon her spirits is generally fatal. There is a softness in the female mind, so very susceptible of tender impressions, that it is next to impossible the idea of a favoured lover should ever be erased; and as it is equally impossible that the libertine professed can confine himself to any single attachment, the woman must necessarily be wretched when she knows that those vows and protestations are indiscriminately paid to the whole sex, which she once vainly imagined were engrossed by herself. Besides this, there is an ingrateful sort of indolence in the temper of the man, which renders him indifferent in proportion to the study taken to please him; and a spaniel-like kind of fondness in the disposition of the woman, which increases her tenderness in proportion as she experiences his indifference or abuse. I seldom or never heard of a man who behaved commonly civil to a woman who had granted him all she could grant, nor knew a woman once forget a man by whom she was destroyed. I have an elegy before me, in which a lady, ruined and forsaken, paints the general situation of the sex in such

ſuch circumſtances, with no little ſenſibility; and as the performance has much merit, I ſhall make no excuſe for tranſcribing a ſtanza or two, and ſubmiting them to the judgment of my readers.

O That no Virgin would incline an ear
To wild profeſſions from inconſtant youth,
But nobly ſcorn a ſentiment to hear,
That ſeems to laugh at innocence and truth.

For if no juſt diſpleaſure ſhe reveals,
Time will convince her, dearly to her coſt,
That ſtep by ſtep the ſweet deluſion ſteals,
Till Fame and Honour are for ever loſt.

The female mind may bid it's terrors ceaſe,
Who never made her ſofter feelings known,
Nor fear a thought deſtructive to her peace,
While Prudence tells her to conceal her own.

But if, alas! in ſome unguarded hour,
From this advice ſhe madly ſhould depart,
She gives her lover an unbounded pow'r
To wound her honour, and to break her heart.

In vain the fair, to ſuch a criſis drove,
In ſenſe or ſoul ſuperior will confide;
For when has reaſon triumph'd over love,
Or inclination been ſubdu'd by pride?

Say, Heav'n! to whom my pray'r is now addreſs'd,
Why are we ſubject to ſo hard a fate,
That, tho' the eaſy fondneſs of our breaſt
Be ſtill abus'd, we never wiſh to hate?

For ev'n this moment, when my grief has ſtole
The aching tribute of a falling tear,
I feel a fooliſh ſomething round my ſoul
Declare the ſoft betrayer is too dear.

Alas! the anguiſh I am doom'd to prove,
From real paſſion only can begin;
For this ſad drop proceeds from ſlighted love;
And pardon, Heav'n, no ſorrow for the ſin.

But, O ye powers! remove each ſofter trace
That calls his faithleſs image to my eyes;
For as I know him infamous and baſe,
It is but juſt I hate him and deſpiſe!

I ſhall conclude this paper with a letter ſent by a young fellow of my acquaintance, lately married to a moſt amiable woman, to a lady who officiated as bride-maid to his wife, and who was weak enough to make him ſome overtures in a little time after the wedding-day.

MADAM,

UNFASHIONABLE ſoever as it may be for a gentleman to have any notion of his moral duties, and inelegant ſoever as it may be in a huſband to pay the leaſt attention to his word as a man, I muſt take the liberty of informing you, that I have too juſt a regard for the vows which I have lately given to an excellent woman, in the preſence of the living God, to think of violating them, by liſtening to any inſinuation of tenderneſs in others of the ſex. And ſuffer me, Madam, to add, that I have not ſuch a cruelty of temper as to deſtroy the eternal quiet of a deſerving lady, which muſt inevitably be the caſe in her moments of reflection, let the paſſions tell her what they will when the reaſon is more off it's guard. I have ſuch an opinion of you, Madam, as to ſuppoſe an intercourſe of an illicit kind would plant daggers in your boſom, when that fine ſenſe of which you are miſtreſs had leave to exert itſelf; and that, however the guilty commerce might be ſecreted from the knowledge of the world, that recollection would harrow up your ſoul, when you whiſpered it to your own.

Think, Madam, of your inexpreſſible beauty, your exalted merit, and your elevated rank; nor ſuffer an unhappy prepoſſeſſion to lead you into any error repugnant to the regard which is due to your own reputation, the honour of your ſex, and the happineſs of your friends; and, believe me, that an attention to this advice, whatever you may think of my behaviour at preſent, will one day oblige you to confeſs, that I am very much your real friend and moſt obedient ſervant.

Should any huſband be in my friend's ſituation, the advice I give him will be a line from an old faſhioned book, called the Teſtament—' Go thou, and do ' likewiſe.'

## Nº XIII. SATURDAY, MAY 7.

HAVING taken the liberty in one of my former Papers to publiſh a POLITICAL DICTIONARY, which was communicated to me by a perſonage of eminence in the literary world, whoſe friendſhip would do me the greateſt honour if it was not a ſort of vanity to reveal his name; I ſhall now lay before my readers a VOCABULARY of a more general nature, written by the ſame hand; which, I preſume, will be no way diſagreeable to ſuch as remember the *Political Dictionary*, as there was ſcarcely a periodical production in the Britiſh dominions which did not immediately take it in.

*Religion.*] A ridiculous compoſition of unfaſhionable ordinances, inſtituted with no other deſign than to check every laudable impulſe of vice and immorality, and calculated for no other purpoſe than to deſtroy the very eſſence of a fine gentleman.

*Generoſity.*] A pitiful under-bred promptitude to reward the merit of the deſerving; like

*Humanity.*] Which is nothing more than a childiſh waſhineſs of nature at the ſufferings, and an inclination to remove the misfortunes, of other people.

*Gratitude.*] A narrow-minded deſpicable remembrance of benefits received, and a ſcandalous deſire of embracing every opportunity to return them.

*Honour.*] An idle regard to the dictates of friendſhip and benevolence, and a paltry adherence to the minuteſt law of order and morality.

*Honeſty.*] A fooliſh regard to the ſanctity of our words upon every occaſion, and a ſervile abhorrence to the ſmalleſt treſpaſs upon the property of our neighbours.

*Courage.*] A low-minded averſion of brutality to ſuch as, from ſituation in life, muſt not preſume to reſent a horſe-whipping, or complain at the loſs of an eye; and a ſilly deſire of avoiding all quarrels but ſuch as relate to the honour of our king, or the glory of our country.

*Decency.*] A mean obſervation of common civility, and an infamous ſuppreſſion of oaths and obſcenity in the preſence of the ladies.

*A tradeſman.*] A ſuperior ſort of coach-horſe, created entirely for the convenience of the great, without either paſſions, reſentment, underſtanding, or inclination.

*Unpardonable impudence.*] An humble ſolicitation for a perſon's own property, and a prudent concern for the maintenance of our wives and children.

*Pride and prodigality.*] The ſmalleſt diſtaſte to poverty and rags, and the leaſt inclination to a light-coloured ſhirt.

*Debt.*] A word under which perſons of faſhion have a right to rob the honeſt and induſtrious, without any fear of ſuffering from the laws of the kingdom, or the reproach of their acquaintance.

*Tranſgreſſion of the law.*] An exertion of that natural right, which every man has to a hare or a partridge belonging to his own grounds, and which deſtroy both his corn and graſs by the authority of parliament.

*Liberty and property.*] An indiſpenſable neceſſity of keeping game for other people to kill, with pains and penalties of the moſt arbitrary kind, if we think of appropriating the minuteſt article to the uſe of our own families.

*A free-born Engliſhman.*] One who is continually bragging of liberty and independence, when he has neither will nor property of his own; and laughs at the wretchedneſs of other countries, while he himſelf is indulged with no other privilege than the right of nominating the perſon by whom he chuſes to be enſlaved.

*Magna Charta.*] An idle word made uſe of by the populace, ſignifying a natural right of being governed by laws which they conſtantly ſuffer to be trampled on, and an inherent claim to the poſſeſſion of thoſe privileges which they have neither ſenſe or ſpirit enough to poſſeſs.

*A ſecretary of ſtate.*] A great officer in whom crimes are no crimes, and who, by a political ſpecies of infallibility, can exerciſe

exercise acts of oppression, without ever dreading the rod of correction, or regarding the poignancy of general reproof.

*The people of Ireland.*] A noble and spirited nation, inviolably attached to us by every tie of friendship and esteem, and who, on every occasion, hazard both their lives and fortunes in our defence; yet to whom we constantly make such just and grateful returns, as to omit no opportunity (however illegal and arbitrary) of beggaring them, though the ruin of their interest lays a manifest foundation for the destruction of our own.

*The lords of the ocean.*] The sensible and spirited people of Great Britain, who have a naval force considerably superior to all the other states of Europe put together, yet servilely do homage to a a nest of little African pirates on the coast of Barbary, and pay a yearly tribute to a set of robbers, whom they ought to root out from the face of the earth.

*An independent freeholder and lover of his country.*] One who, on every election for a member of parliament, sacrifices his conscience to his convenience, sets up his dear country and his darling freedom to the best bidder, yet impudently finds fault with his representative for following so laudable an example, nor suffers any body to be a scoundrel, without reproach, but himself.

*A peerage.*] In former days, an honour conferred upon such as had rendered themselves conspicuous for their merit, and eminent for their virtues; but in the more modern ages it has been, in general, the wages of venality and corruption, and a distinction not to be purchased at a smaller price than everlasting infamy and disgrace.

*A regard for the royal prerogative.*] A worn-out pretence to infringe upon the laws, and a glaring design upon the privileges of the people.

*National egotism or gasconade.*] An unpardonable custom among the French of extolling their own merit to the skies, but never practised among the modest natives of this kingdom, though our presses are every moment teeming with 'sons of liberty, roast-beef and pudding, noble-minded Britons, and free-born Englishmen.'

*A blessed martyr.*] A perjured prince, who broke his coronation oath in the most material of all points, governed without a parliament, imprisoned his subjects for refusing to lend him money, commenced a false, villainous prosecution for high treason, against a most deserving nobleman, (the Earl of Bristol) whom he knew to be innocent, because that lord had impeached the Duke of Buckingham, whom he knew to be guilty; reduced his people to the dreadful necessity of taking up arms in their own defence, which produced the utmost confusion in religion and state; and by his shameful dissimulation when he was about to be restored, left it utterly impossible to confide in his honour, his humanity, or his oath; but drove the principal officers of the adverse party, in their own defence, to sit in trial upon their sovereign, and sentence him to death.—Truly, a very blessed martyr! Had this prince been a private man, who would have dared to say a word in his defence, though such a number of writers have pleaded his royalty, which ought to be an aggravation, as a considerable palliative, nay a total excuse, for his crimes?

## N° XIV. SATURDAY, MAY 14.

I Am never more diverted than when I see your grave important set of gentlemen, who would pass upon the world as men of extraordinary sagacity, running into a number of little petulancies, which they imagine themselves to be considerably above, and fretting at the veriest trifles we can think of, when they affect a superiority of resolution, which the most striking calamities of life are not sufficiently powerful to disturb.

This species of philosophers is generally composed of men who have much pride, or little understanding; and who, through a contemptible sort of vanity, make themselves not a little less than human, that they may have an opportunity of appearing in the eyes of the injudicious to be infinitely more. Of this cast was the elder Brutus, who passed sentence of death upon his own sons without the shadow of a pang; yet, at

another time, knocked one of his servants down for putting a grain of salt too much in his broth.

But, without going so very far back for instances of this extraordinary class of mankind, my old friend Frank Surly is one of the most remarkable which it has ever produced. Frank and I were bred together at Westminster; and before he was twelve years of age, he was distinguished from every other boy in the school by the uncommon morosenefs of his temper, and his contempt of those punishments which the generality of his age and standing always held in the greatest dread. There were few lads in the whole school superior to Frank either in application or abilities; yet I have known him frequently inattentive and careless about his lessons, that we might see with how much fortitude he could bear to be flogged. Nay, if any of his intimates had been guilty of any roguish prank which deserved the discipline of the rod, he would often desire them to lay the blame on him, and suffer, with all the composure in the world, a hearty flagellation in their stead. Unhappily, however, upon one of these occasions, when Frank was going to be punished for some petty crime, which he begged might be laid to his charge, the lad who was really guilty of the fact, struck with his behaviour, went up to the master, and without disguise related the affair, acknowledged the fault, and declared he would rather be cut to pieces than see another suffer for an action which he had committed himself. The lad's generosity had an effect upon the master; nor was he without some surprize at the behaviour of Fank. He dismissed them both to their seats; and, to the inexpressible concern of the latter, never flogged him after. Frank finding he could have no opportunity of shewing his stoicism any longer, through downright pride, paid an application to his studies that in a little time made him the best scholar in the whole school; and resolving to be remarkable for the extremities of his behaviour, the moment the master had declared he would never gratify him with another whipping, he grew remarkably well behaved, and piqued himself upon keeping up a consequence and dignity in his actions, to prove that the fear of punishment had nothing to do in the reformation of his manners.

The same disposition which distinguished Frank in his earlier years, has all along rendered him conspicuous since his reach to maturity. As he and I still hold up an intimacy, whenever I go down into Oxfordshire, I pass a week at his house. The last time I was there, he was laid up with a very violent fit of the gout; and whenever the pain was at an extremity, he would converse with unusual chearfulness, or divert himself with one of the songs which were in vogue when he and I were younkers. If any body pitied him, he instantly flew into a passion; but if you seemed to make slight of bodily anguish and infirmity, he shook you by the hand, and told you, you were a man of understanding. About ten years ago, my old friend married a most valuable woman, of whom he was passionately fond, and who returned his affection almost to madness. As their circumstances were affluent, this reciprocal regard, one would imagine, should have produced their mutual felicity—But far on the contrary—Frank was too proud to be happy; and as his love for Mrs. Surly was universally known to be excessive, he was never satisfied unless he treated her as the object of his hate. He only lived in her looks, and yet he has torn himself from her presence for three whole weeks; and so unaccountably headlong was he hurried by this ridiculous stoicism, that, upon her death, which happened in childbed, though his soul was tortured with all the anguish of consummate pity and distracted love, he went to the assembly an hour after her decease, and sat up—(a tear now and then straying down his cheek)—along with Colonel Tierce, Major Piquet, and Sir Oliver Ombre, at a party of whist.

A person so apparently steeled against the calamities of life, we should reasonably expect, would hold the little impertinencies or interruptions of it in the greatest contempt: but this is far from being the case with my friend Frank; a plait more or less in his shirt-sleeve will set him raving for an hour; and I remember that he shot a favourite dog one day, in the stable-yard, for leaping accidentally up and dirtying the skirt of his coat. It is impossible to enumerate the various inconsistencies of my poor friend's character. I once knew him set up a careless drunken fellow of a

coachman, who overturned him in a ditch, in a very handſome inn, three weeks after; and at another time diſcharge his footman, at a moment's warning, for wearing too little powder in his wig.

Were we to make an eſſay into human nature, and examine the lives of our modern philoſophers with any degree of circumſpection, we ſhould find the principal number approach ſo very near the ſtandard of Frank Surly, that the account given of him will ſerve as no improper deſcription of them all. The ridiculous light in which one of the moſt ſenſible is ſet, will, I hope, ſerve for as good an admonition as I can poſſibly give to this tribe of very important beings; and I ſhall think myſelf particularly happy if the foregoing picture is attended with any ſalutary effect.

## Nº XV. SATURDAY, MAY 21.

I Did myſelf the pleaſure, a few evenings ago, to call at the houſe of an old friend, with whom I have been intimate theſe thirty years, and for whom I have infinitely more than a common reſpect. An affair of arbitration had, however, called him abroad; and I found nobody at home but Miſs Maria, his younger daughter, who is now the moſt lively picture of innocence and beauty which I ever ſaw, and cloſely bordering upon twenty-one. As I always avoid ſtiffening my converſation with the ſtarch of antiquity, and conſtantly endeavour at appearing more ready to be inſtructed than to inſtruct, the young people are very fond of admitting me into their company; and there is ſcarcely a day that I have not an invitation or two from ſome of the moſt ſprightly tea-tables in town; which is more, I fancy, than can be ſaid by any other old fellow of ſixty within the weekly bills.

On my enquiring for her papa, Miſs Maria ſtepped out of the parlour, and ſeizing one of my hands, cried—'O Mr. 'Babler, is it you? I inſiſt upon your 'coming in.' Few entreaties are neceſſary to make a man do what he likes. I immediately aſſented, ſat down, and paſſed two of the moſt agreeable hours I ever experienced in my whole life.

Our converſation, after turning upon a variety of topics, at laſt fell upon that divine part of our church-worſhip, in which the congregation ſing praiſes to the Moſt High. 'If it is proper,' ſays Maria, 'for a perſon of my years to 'ſpeak of ſo important a ſubject as re'ligion, and not too preſumptuous for 'the petticoats to comment upon the 'worſhip of the church, I ſhould think, 'Mr. Babler, that this part of our li'turgy might be very much improved. 'Great complaints have been often 'made, that ſo ſmall a number of the 'congregation join in the ſinging of 'pſalms; and though I admit the neg'lect is highly unpardonable, and the 'cenſure extremely juſt, yet reforma'tion would, in my opinion, be infi'nitely ſuperior to reprehenſion; and I 'think every room for complaint might 'be removed by a proper ſuppreſſion of 'the cauſe.

'The end of poetry and muſic, if I 'am right in my information, is to ac'tuate upon the paſſions; and, in all 'religious compoſition, to raiſe the mind 'to an elevated deſire of acknowledging 'the wonderful mercy and goodneſs of 'the divine Being. How far the hymns 'uſed in the eſtabliſhed church for this 'purpoſe are from anſwering ſo ſalu'tary an end, it is no leſs painful than 'unneceſſary to obſerve: in the verſifi'cation of the very beſt pſalms, all the 'rapture of the original text is loſt, and 'in that the muſic ſhould be no way ſu'perior to the poetry; there is hardly 'any one tune which can create the leaſt 'emotion but ſleep. In fact, Sir, the 'moſt trifling compoſitions, which are 'formed for the buſineſs of amuſement, 'have twenty times more merit than 'thoſe ſet apart for the ſervice of reli'gion; and infinitely greater pains are 'taken in the writing or ſetting of a 'Ranelagh ballad, than in a hymn to 'the honour of the living God.

'From what I have ſaid, Mr. Bab'ler, I would by no means infer, that 'either the poetical or muſical part of 'our hymns ſhould be light, trifling, 'or airy; but ſurely, Sir, the ſpirit of 'devotion would breathe conſiderably 'ſtronger in theſe pieces, and have a

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'much greater effect, if an author of 'reputation should give us a fine versi- 'fication of the psalms, and a master of 'eminence should receive proper encou- 'ragement to see them exquisitely set. 'We have a number of tunes, plaintive, 'solemn, and enchanting, to a miracle; 'which are nevertheless as familiar as 'they are charming, and calculated to 'bewitch the careless and inattentive to 'a sense, to a passion for that duty 'which they now treat with a lifeless 'indifference, or an insupportable neg- 'lect. Religion, Sir, by this means, 'would become fashionable; and it 'would be deemed no longer inelegant 'for a fine lady, or a fine gentleman, to 'join in the praises of their God.

'Lord, Mr. Babler, how can you 'have patience to hear me chatter so 'much! but I shall not trespass on your 'patience much longer. Mr. Well- 'worth (who, you know, visits us every 'day) and I were talking on this very 'subject a few evenings ago; and as he 'has really a sweet taste for poetry, I 'took the liberty of requesting he would 'write me a hymn, whether penitential 'or thanksgiving, I left to himself. 'He called on me this morning, and 'brought it in his hand. I think it 'mighty pretty, and shall be very hap- 'py if my opinion should receive such 'a sanction as yours, Mr. Babler. Mr. 'Wellworth read it to me with great 'sensibility; and I own I thought he 'never looked so well in all his life.'

Some how or other my eye encountered with Miss Maria's at the end of this speech; she seemed conscious; and on my observing that Mr. Wellworth was an excellent young man, she reddened excessively, and seemed at a stand for words. As I would not confuse her by any means, I shifted the conversation; but she resumed it immediately, and said—'Well, Mr. Babler, you 'must give me your sentiments on this 'little production; here it is,' continued she, taking it out of her pocket-book—and here—no, not here, but in the next number, I shall present it, with something else of consequence which it occasioned, to my readers.

## Nº XVI. SATURDAY, MAY 28.

IN my last I promised my readers a Hymn; and as I would by no means be worse than my word, or delay their expectations, I give it without further introduction.

### HYMN.

THE lark, now high soaring in air,
  Salutes the first blush of the morn,
And the roses new incense prepare,
  To breathe on the dew-dropping thorn;
Fresh feelings instinctively spring
  In the steer, as he turns up the clod;
And creation itself seems to sing,
  In the honour and glory of God.

II.

In what sensual mazes with-held,
  Is man now unhappily lost!
In the rage of what passion impell'd,
  On the sea of what vice is he tost?
O! instantly let him proclaim,
  What the herbage all tells on the sod;
And if gratitude cannot, let shame,
  Awake to the praises of God.

III.

The eye of some maid in despair,
  Does his perjury fatally dim?
Or some breast does he cruelly tear,
  That beats, and beats only for him?
All swift as the lightning's keen blaze,
  Let him humble before the dread rod,
Nor join so unhallow'd in praise,
  To the honour and glory of God.

IV.

Some law does he madly defy,
  Which the Being of beings commands!
The bolt ready lifted on high,
  Shall dash him to dust as he stands:
In thunder Omnipotence breaks,
  Fall prostrate, O wretch! at his nod;
See earth to her center deep shakes,
  All dismay'd at the voice of her God!

V.

Life's road let me cautiously view,
  And no longer disdain to be wise;
But redden such paths to pursue,
  As my reason should hate or despise:
To crown both my age and my youth,
  Let me mark where religion has trod;
Since nothing but virtue and truth
  Can reach to the throne of my God.

When I had done reading, Miss Maria demanded my opinion of this performance, which I could not but praise very much. I told her, however, that the thought of concluding every stanza with the name of the Deity was borrowed

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rowed from Eve's Hymn in the Death of Abel; though I could not think of making any comparifon, pretty as that hymn was, with this of Mr. Wellworth's. The young lady feemed vaftly delighted at my commendation; and was beginning to make a verbal acknowledgment of her fatisfaction, when her father's rap was heard at the door— My old friend entered the parlour with an air of mingled anger and dejection; and, inftead of taking any notice of me, began at once upon his daughter—'So, 'Madam, this is fine information I have 'received!—What, you are under an 'engagement to Mr Wellworth, are 'you? O Maria! Maria!'

The fecret was now out; and I found my fufpicions of Mifs Maria's attachment had confiderably more than a tolerable ground. The poor girl ftood quite confounded, and feemed utterly incapable of making a reply. As I faw nothing culpable in her regard for a worthy young fellow, I took upon me to intercede in her behalf; and at laft reduced her father to the temper I could wifh. I found a difparity of fortune was the only objection which the old gentleman had to his daughter's choice; for though my friend has as benevolent a heart as any man alive, yet he has the caution of all old fellows, and keeps a ftrict eye on the main chance. When I had brought him to fome degree of good-humour, I took an opportunity of turning the converfation, and read him the foregoing hymn. He was charmed with it, and afked me if I knew the author. 'Yes,' fays I, 'Mr. Well'worth.'—'Fore God!' returned he, 'though I do not approve of his con'nection with my daughter, I am 'mightily taken with his works.' This was all I wanted—'And pray, my good 'Sir,' anfwered I, 'which is it more for 'your credit and your child's happinefs, 'to beftow her on a deferving young man, 'whom fhe loves, and you cannot but 'admire, or to run the precarious iffue 'of matching her with one, who, though 'he may have twice Mr. Wellworth's 'fortune, either may not have fenfe or 'inclination to reward either her me'rit, or your goodnefs, as he ought? 'You can fettle them both, if not fplen'didly, at leaft elegantly, in the world; 'and, my life for it, in a year or two, 'you would not change your fon-in'law for the Indies.' I faw my old friend was ftruck with the juftice of the cafe; yet ftill he feemed defirous of being perfuaded to act as he knew he ought—I indulged him; and Saturday laft he and I obtained a fpecial licence; and, to the inexpreffible happinefs of the young folks, got them married that morning.

## Nº XVII. SATURDAY, JUNE 4.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

As I find it fo very cuftomary for people of all denominations to give a fketch of their lives, and to publifh any particular inftances of folly, or extraordinary turns of fortune, to the world; I take the liberty of fending you a portrait of myfelf; in which, abftracted from it's being a ftriking likenefs, I fhall claim no merit, unlefs it be allowed a general one.

I am the only fon of a tradefman, who died about five years ago in the city, Mr. Babler, and left me in very handfome circumftances. My father had a common-council fort of pride about him, which afpired at bringing up his fon a gentleman, and an ambition of making him carry an air of profufion, while the moft rigid œconomy was obferved in his expence. I have been tricked out, Sir, in the very pink of city finery, a laced waiftcoat and a bag-wig, at a time that I was fcarcely allowed a fufficiency to pay my club at the Horfefhoe and Magpie; and talked about tavern bills and fupper, when half a guinea has been the extent of my finances for a whole week.

Upon the death of old Squaretoes, Mr. Babler, I found myfelf poffeffed of ten thoufand pounds; and fcarcely got a wink of fleep, during a whole month, my imagination was fo perpetually haunted by the recollection of the fum. Habituated, however, to the fight of the money, I foon began to entertain a notion of laying a few hundreds elegantly out. With this view a carriage was inftantly befpoke, an everlafting leave taken of all the ftreets between Temple

Bar

Bar and Whitechapel, and a handſome apartment furniſhed at the other end of the town. The three formidable letters of E, S, and Q, were quickly added to my name; and having a ſtrong inclination to be thought, I fancied in reality that I was, a fine gentleman.

The firſt ſix weeks after it came home, I ſpent at leaſt fourteen hours a day in my coach. I appeared every where, ſaw every thing, and upon addreſſing days frequently invited ſome of the aldermen to a diſh of chocolate. Indeed, one accident happened at my firſt going to court which made me not a little taken notice of: I never before had preſumed to put on a ſword, and being in the circle making my bow, it unfortunately got between my legs, and threw me on my face; in order to ſave myſelf from falling, I laid hold of an officer's ſkirt, who was juſt near me, and held it with ſuch a force, that I dragged him with me down. The whole drawing-room was in a roar; the ladies tittered, the men burſt into a horſe-laugh, and even the face of majeſty itſelf relaxed into a ſmile. As ſoon as poſſible I picked myſelf up, and retired; the officer did the ſame; and as I had been the cauſe of his diſgrace, I made him a number of apologies, and took him home to dine. Before we parted, a reciprocal eſteem was cordially expreſſed; and my new acquaintance talking ſomething about a ſcarcity of money, he did me the favour to borrow fifty pieces, and gave me a poſitive aſſurance of coming to breakfaſt the next morning.

He was better than his word; he came, and brought half a dozen brother officers in his hand. We dined at Almacks; drank Burgundy till we were blind; ſcoured the ſtreets, and beat the watch. The frolic was new to me, Mr. Babler; I was charmed with it; and behaved ſo well, that my companions honoured me with the name of a very honeſt fellow, and ſwore it was a damned pity I was ſo aukward with my ſword.

Theſe being the firſt gentlemen I ever had acquaintance with, it is no wonder I treated them with extraordinary reſpect: bred up to an intercourſe with none but ſellers of linen, and dealers in packthread, I conſidered every man with a laced coat and cockade as infinitely my ſuperior; and endeavoured, with a ſedulity of an uncommon nature, to imitate what I ſo paſſionately admired. Happily, my endeavours ſucceeded ſo well, that in a little time I ſwore, got drunk, broke windows, kicked waiters, and inſulted modeſt women, with as good a grace as if I had been colonel of a regiment.

In theſe faſhionable amuſements I waſted away above half my fortune in two or three years, with no other character than that of a very honeſt fellow; when a ſpirited rape on the daughter of my taylor took away two thouſand pounds to huſh a proſecution and make it up. The action increaſed my reputation, but hurt my circumſtances much: I had not now as much more left in the world. I was diſclaimed by my relations, and deſpiſed by my father's ſober friends. One half of my companions had died, and the other half were in danger of a jail. The ſame misfortune ſtared me in the face; my debts were numerous, my creditors preſſing; diſcharged they were obliged to be, and accordingly were; and, when every thing was finally ſettled, I found myſelf, inſtead of having increaſed my ten thouſand, to have no more than ſeven hundred and fifty pounds left. What was to be done? I could not bear the thoughts of going back into the city, and underſtood no buſineſs if I did. A lieutenancy offering, I purchaſed it as the laſt reſource, and am now ſtarving upon the half pay. A ſtriking example of ignorant pride and under-bred prodigality; at once the warning and contempt of our ſhewy little citizens.

My letter needs neither comment nor application; what I ſhall ſay may be contained in the butt-end of the old ſong—

Learn to be wiſe from other's harms,
And you ſhall do full well.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

WILLIAM WEAKLY.

## No XVIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 11.

UNFASHIONABLE soever as it may be to enter upon religious subjects in such an age as the present, there are some who, I flatter myself, will nevertheless pay a little attention to a topic of such importance without a blush, and think it no disgrace either to their gentility or their understanding, to employ a few moments in the consideration of some points, for which, at the awful period of their dissolution, eternities upon eternities will hardly seem too much.

When we consider the differences which daily subsist in the various modes or systems of the Christian religion, and think upon the inflexible partiality which every man entertains in favour of his own, we ought to be absolutely certain that the particular form which each of us glories to possess, is perfectly conformable to our notions of the Deity, and consistent in the minutest degree with those divine lessons which were inculcated by the Saviour of the world, in his mysterious mission to man. If we are not positive in this, let our belief be distinguished by what name soever we think proper, let us be Protestants or Papists, Quakers or Presbyterians, I can take upon me to aver, that we have no right to the name of Christians; and may, with equal propriety, take a lesson from the ALCORAN as the GOSPEL.

It is not the ceremony used at baptism, the sprinkling of water, nor the promises of our parents in the presence of God, which constitute the CHRISTIAN; no, it is an actual conformity to the precepts of our BLESSED LORD, and an undeviating obedience to the tenets which are laid down in the history of his life and miracles. Nothing can be more absurd, nor in reality more criminal, than for a man to aspire at the glorious title of a *Christian*, who is regardless of the duties which that appellation renders indispensably necessary, or a stranger to the obligations which are particularly enjoined by the name; it is at once a fatal deception of his own most important expectations, an insult to his *Saviour*, and a defiance of his *God*.

With what propriety, shall I beg leave to ask, can the various sects of religion in this kingdom call themselves *Christians*, when, in the unremitting hatred which they constantly entertain towards one another, they utterly destroy that universal principle of *Charity* which ought to be the foundation, nay, the very essence of their belief? With what propriety can he, who is blessed with unbounded affluence, stile himself a *Christian*, if his ear is turned away from the sight of affliction, or his heart unaffected with the tear of distress? *Christianity* obliges him to a constant relief of the wretched; and, without a behaviour entirely consonant to the duties of this belief, what possible pretension can he have to a name that exalts him to a fellowship with angels, and lifts him above the stars? Will a constant attendance on the public place of his worship, exculpate the oppressor of the widow and the fatherless? or give the name of *Christian* to the villain who infamously lifts a dagger to the breast of his benefactor, or basely strives to murder the reputation of his friend? Can the betrayer of unsuspecting innocence think on the pangs of some violated virgin, left without assistance, without comfort, without bread; exposed to all the upbraidings of a relentless world, to aggravate the severity of her own reflections, and possibly plunged in the additional misery of having a helpless little innocent, and an unalterable affection for the monster by whom she is so cruelly undone? I say, can the perpetrator of an act like this, sit down calmly, satisfied with the rectitude of his behaviour, and think himself, as a *Christian*, sincerely acquitted to his *God?* Alas! if any man, thus culpable, can be so presumptuously daring as to think himself a *Christian*, it is doubtful whether he is most a reprobate or an idiot, or whether he is most regardless or ignorant of his crimes.

In every profession of the *Christian* faith there is a number of good natured people, who are always uneasy about the fate of the *Mahometans*, and terribly afflicted lest the ignorant savages of *America* should not, at the last day, be received into the favour of the *Supreme Being*. These people entertain strange notions

notions of the *Deity*, if they can suppose that a Power *all-wise*, *all-merciful*, and *all-just*, will require, at the hands of such ignorant nations, a knowledge which he has not thought proper to bestow: a supposition of such a nature is highly derogatory to the Divine Essence; it is a tacit implication that the *great Father* of the universe exercises a severity which would be cruel in his creatures but to think of; and a palpable insinuation, that the *Being of beings* is capable of a tyranny which would utterly degrade the meanest, in the human race, among the wonders of his hand. No; from such only as have received much, much is expected; and perhaps, at the last day, myriads of our *nominal* Christians, who look upon the *American Savage* with pity or contempt, would give a hecatomb of worlds, had they power to change situations, to have so little to answer for as him. Conformable to what he knows, he invariably regulates the tenor of his conduct, maintains an unalterable reverence for some great object which he looks upon as his God, and pays an implicit obedience to his laws; whatever his system of belief may be, he endeavours to do it all the honour in his power, and shudders at nothing so much as the thought of bringing it into disgrace. Who amongst us can honestly say the same? Enlightened with the lamp of science, and the sun of true religion, *our* actions are a perpetual stigma on our belief: we acknowledge the wonderful mercies of a *suffering Redeemer*, yet are continually uttering blasphemies against his name; we own the infinite merits of his Gospel, and yet act in manifest contradiction to every precept it contains. The Deity, we are sensible, can think us into ashes for the enormity of our crimes, and yet we continue to behave in open disobedience to his will: in short, both hoping and fearing the existence of another world, we sacrifice every valuable opportunity in this; and, constantly boasting the advantages accruing from our religion, we are always acting as if we had no religion at all. Let us, therefore, instead of condemning the errors of our neighbours, begin with correcting whatever is amiss in ourselves; and, instead of finding fault with the religion of other people, be satisfied that *real* Christianity is the basis of our own. The whole mystery, both of religion and government, will be found in these admirable lines of Mr. Pope—

For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administred, is best.
For modes of faith, let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right.

## Nº XIX. SATURDAY, JUNE 18.

### ORASMIN AND ALMIRA:

#### AN ORIENTAL TALE.

SON of man, learn resignation to the appointments of Providence, nor dare to drop a murmur at the dispensations of the Most Just. Think not of disputing with the wisdom of Infinity; nor dream of wresting the vindictive thunderbolt from the dread right-hand of God.

In the city of Bagdad, so celebrated by the sages of antiquity, lived Orasmin, the son of Ibrahim, whose name was an Aromatic that perfumed the remotest corners of the East. His person was as noble as the rising oak in the forest, and his mind as unsullied as a meridian beam from the sun; his bounty wiped away the tear from the eye of the fatherless, nor did the mourning of the widow ever pass unregarded at his gate. To sum up his character at once, complacency and benevolence were always seated on his brow; and humanity was a virtue so natural to his heart, that it formed the very core, and twisted round the strings. Thus amiable, it was no wonder, that by all who saw him he should be instantly admired; and thus deserving, no way strange, that by all who knew him he should be cordially respected and beloved.

Among a variety of virgins who languished for Orasmin, Almira, a damsel of Balsora, newly arrived at Bagdad, was the only person blessed with a reciprocal esteem. The blush of the morning was less rosy than her cheek, and the diamond of Golconda not so brilliant as her eye; her bosom was as white as the

the ſwan upon the waters, and gentle as the midſummer murmur of the ſtream. How oft, O ye groves of Balſora, have ye echoed with the fame of her beauty! How oft, O ye vallies of Bagdad, have ye reſounded with her praiſe! You know that her voice would chain the tiger of the deſart, and unnerve the wild ſtag as he darted from the hill; you know that the ſpices of Ormus could not equal her in breath, nor the daughters of Paradiſe excel her in dignity and grace.

Oraſmin and Almira were not more diſtinguiſhed for their merit, than remarkable for their loves; and as neither had any parent living to oppoſe their wiſhes, a day was appointed for the celebration of their nuptials, to the univerſal ſatisfaction of their friends. Oraſmin, all impatient for poſſeſſing the only object that had ever engroſſed his heart, longed for the happy hour with the utmoſt anxiety, and feaſted his imagination continually with the raptures he was to experience in the arms of Almira. She, not leſs impatient, though more confined in her expreſſions of the approaching felicity, painted equally warm to her fancy the uninterrupted enjoyment of all ſhe held dear, and counted over the weeks, the months, and the years, ſhe had a probable expectation of paſſing in the tendereſt intercourſe with her adored Oraſmin. But, alas! while our lovers were thus enhancing the preſent, by reflecting on the future, an order arrived for Almira to attend the Caliph, who had for ſome time been entertained with various reports of her unparalleled beauty, and wanted to ſee if the encomiums laviſhed ſo frequently upon her were juſt. Neither her religion nor her allegiance could allow her to form any excuſe for not attending the *Commander of the Faithful*, much leſs admit of a reſolution to diſobey; he was worſhipped with an implicit reverence, as a ſucceſſor of the holy Mahomet, by all his people, and his word was ever looked upon as the irrevocable voice of Fate. Almira, therefore, was immediately carried, with a bleeding heart, to the palace; and the moment ſhe was beheld by the Caliph, declared the moſt favourite of his queens.

It is not in language to tell the diſtraction of the two lovers, at being thus unexpectedly torn for ever from each other's arms. The moment Oraſmin heard that his Almira had captivated the Caliph, he looked upon the buſineſs of life to be entirely over; and, unable to ſupport the inexpreſſible agonies of his own mind, conſidered the angel of death as the only miniſter of repoſe: for two whole days and nights he wandered through the various rooms of his houſe in an abſolute ſtate of phrenzy, calling out at every interval, in the moſt paſſionate tone, on the name of his raviſhed Almira. On the third day, growing ſomewhat calmer, he began to reflect on all the circumſtances of his paſt life, in order to find out in what particular he had given Mahomet ſuch unpardonable offence, as to meet with ſo ſevere a chaſtiſement at his hands. After revolving a long time, and finding nothing but ſome youthful indiſcretions to anſwer for, which were infinitely overbalanced by a number of meritorious actions, he inſenſibly dropped upon one knee, and began to expoſtulate, in the following manner, with his God—

'Thou great Creator of the univerſe, 'who ſitteſt enthroned above the ſeven 'heavens, where even the conception of 'no prophet but the holy Mahomet 'can dare to ſoar; look down in mercy 'on a wretch, who numbers himſelf 'with the moſt unhappy of human be'ings, though he has conſtantly main'tained the deepeſt reverence for thy 'laws; tell him, O thou infinitely High! 'inform him, O thou inexpreſſibly 'Juſt! why he, who has ever made it 'his unalterable ſtudy to deſerve thy 'awful ſanction on his deeds, is deemed 'to ſuffer what the moſt impious pro'phaner of thy divine will would look 'upon as a ſeverity, and confidently 'exclaim, was too great a puniſhment 'for the moſt enormous of his crimes!'

Oraſmin had ſcarcely ended, when a clap of thunder ſhook the houſe, and an unuſual brightneſs lightened the room, where he ſtill continued on his knee, aſtoniſhed at this apparent meſſage from the Deity. When he recovered himſelf a little, a voice, as awful as the trumpet of heaven, deſired him carefully to attend, and thus went on—'Ceaſe, O 'miſtaken man, to doubt the mercy 'and juſtice of the Supreme Being, 'who, though he acts by unknown 'ſprings and ſeeming ſeverities, is ever 'watchful for the happineſs of the vir'tuous, and perfectly conſiſtent in all

'his laws. Confider, Orafmin, that 'this world is a tranfitory bubble, which 'muft fhortly burft upon the ocean of 'time; that it is at beft but a fhort 'voyage, in which every paffenger muft 'meet with fome difagreeable gales, in 'order to prove his dependence on the 'hand of Infinite Goodnefs, and fhew 'that he is worthy of entering into an 'everlafting port. Without fome ad-'verfe ftorms to ruffle the fea of life, 'the tide of profperity would frequently 'fwell the creature into a forgetfulnefs 'of the Creator, and reduce him to a 'more dangerous fituation than the bit-'tereft blaft he can experience will ever 'bring him to—a total indifference of 'his God. Out of mercy, therefore, 'a variety of fhoals and quickfands are 'thrown in his way, which keeping the 'fenfe of his dependence on the Divine 'Being conftantly alive in this world, 'puts him in a capacity of fteering his 'bark in the proper channel, and en-'ables him to arrive at endlefs happi-'nefs in the next. But, abftracted 'from this general order in the ftate of 'things, know, Orafmin, that becaufe 'thou wert a peculiar favourite of Hea-'ven, it was decreed to fnatch Almira 'from thy arms: fhe was, O man, 'thy fifter. Ibrahim, thy father, 'journeying to Balfora, was admitted 'to the Cady's wife, and the product 'of their guilty commerce was Almira. 'Here again obferve the kindnefs of Hea-'ven in it's very feverities, which, in or-'der to deter the parent from the commif-'fion of enormities, denounces a judg-'ment againft what he values more high-'ly than worlds, his race. Orafmin, be 'comforted; I have vifited Almira, 'and informed her of thefe things; fhe 'is at eafe, remain thou fo too, and 'remember never again to doubt the 'goodnefs of Providence, which in it's 'own time will reward thofe who place 'their confidence in it's hands.' Oraf-min after this lived many years in happinefs, and left many children, who fucceeded to his virtues and fortune; the eldeft of whom was grand vizier to the Caliph Haroun Alrafchid, and ordered thefe matters to be recorded in the hiftories of Bagdad.

## N° XX. SATURDAY, JUNE 25.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

FORTITUDE and conftancy of mind are qualities to which every nation, in proportion as it is civilized, lays a formidable claim; and to which, however, very few, were we to examine the matter thoroughly, can have any tolerable pretenfion, befides the compliment which on thofe occafions each is fo extremely liberal in paying to itfelf. In fact, it might not be difficult to prove, from every day's experience, that the propagation of the fciences, while they improve, generally enervate the mind; and that true fortitude and conftancy of foul, are more the refult of a felf-approving confcience than the effect of an excellent underftanding.

A number of philofophers, who have aftonifhed the world with the greatnefs of their genius, and the extent of their reading, might talk very prettily on this fubject; but when they came once to put any of their own leffons into practice, this boafted refolution of which they imagined themfelves poffeffed, difappeared in an inftant; and from deferving the univerfal admiration of mankind, they became entitled to nothing but an abfolute contempt. Cicero, in his orations, might exprefs the greateft difregard of death he pleafed, and tell us that a man fhould not hefitate a moment in facrificing his life for the good of his country; but the orator found the practice infinitely harder than the precept, and leagued himfelf with the enemies of the public, after all, in hope of faving the life which he affected fo highly to defpife.

Who could talk better upon the virtues, or give more excellent leffons of morality, than our own countryman my Lord St. Albans; yet who, when he fell from the pinnacle of honour and preferment, ever fhewed a greater fervility of mind, or took more infamous methods to repair his fhattered fortune? The moft fcandalous adulation that could be paid at court, he was conftantly paying; and notwithftanding, after his difgrace, he was writing a book which confers an honour on human nature, yet his in-

tervals were taken up in defending every pernicious meafure of the crown, and employed in deftroying the liberty of his country. Need the caufe of his difgrace be mentioned here, to prove that, notwithftanding his wonderful abilities, he wanted fortitude to refift the force of a trifling fum of money, and honefty to difcharge the important duties of his truft? Or what fhall we fay of a man, who, while he was eftablifhing the higheft teftimony of human genius, for two or three hundred pounds erected an everlafting monument of human bafenefs too? In reality, fcience and underftanding can do nothing more than teach our conftancy and fortitude a nobler way of appearing; the qualities themfelves muft proceed from a firmer foundation than both. The wifdom of Socrates gave *a manner* to his fortitude, which left an irrefiftible charm in his death; but the fortitude itfelf proceeded not from the excellence of his underftanding, but the goodnefs of his heart.

But to prove, beyond a poffibility of difpute, that a knowledge of the fciences has nothing to do in the qualities under confideration, let us only refer to the behaviour of a poor Indian, as related by Lafitaw*, taken in battle by his enemies, and condemned as a facrifice to the manes of fuch as either he himfelf or his countrymen deftroyed in the field. —The moment he is condemned, he opens his death-fong, and is faftened to a ftake, the chiefs of the nation which has taken him fitting round a fire, and fmoaking all the time. Such as chufe to be concerned in the execution, begin with torturing at the extremities of his body, till by degrees they approach the trunk; one pulls off all his nails from the roots; another takes a finger and tears off the flefh with his teeth; a third takes the finger, thus mangled, and thrufts it into the bowl of a pipe made red-hot, and fmokes it like tobacco; others cut and flafh the flefhy parts of his body, and fear the wounds immediately up with burning irons; fome ftrip the fkin off his head, and pour boiling lead upon it; others tear the flefh entirely from his arms, and twift the bare tendrils and finews round red-hot irons, twifting and fnapping at the fame time; fome pound his fingers and toes to pieces between two ftones; others all the while diftending and ftretching every limb and joint, to encreafe the inconceivable horror of his pains. During this, the miferable fufferer, fometimes rendered infenfible by the torture, falls into fo profound a fleep, that they are obliged to apply the fire to recover him, and untie him, to give a breathing to the fury of their own revenge. Again he is tied, and his teeth drawn one by one, his eyes beat out, and no one trace of humanity left in his vifage. In this fituation, all over one continued mummy, one inexpreffible wound, they beat him from one to another with clubs; the wretch now up, now down, falling in their fires at every ftep; till at laft, wearied out with cruelty, fome of their chiefs put an end with a dagger to his fufferings, and terminates the execution, which often lafts five or fix hours, by ordering on the kettle, and making a feaft as horrid and barbarous as their revenge.

But what renders this more furprifing, is a conteft which fubfifts all the time between the fufferer and them, whether he has moft fortitude in bearing, or they ingenuity in aggravating, his pangs. At every interval they give him, he fmokes unconcerned with the reft, without one murmur or fhadow of a groan; recounts what exploits he has done, and tells them how many of their countrymen he has killed, in order to encreafe their fury; nay, he reproaches them with an ignorance of torturing, and points out fuch parts of his body himfelf as are more exquifitely fenfible of pain. The women have this part of courage with the men; and, incredible foever as fuch an aftonifhing conftancy of mind may appear, it would be as odd to fee one of thefe people fuffer in another manner, as it would be to find an European who could fuffer with any thing like their fortitude. An inflexible uniformity to the principles in which they are bred is the occafion of this fortitude; and, without one fpark of learning, occafions a behaviour which diftances the moft celebrated ftories of antiquity, and baffles the profoundeft leffons of all the philofophers.

T. B.

N°

E. F. Burney del. Walker sculp.

Plate I. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Octr. 21. 1786.

## Nº XXI. SATURDAY, JULY 2.

FEW of the nobler qualifications are fo generally pretended to as Friendfhip, or a capacity of entertaining fo cordial a regard for the intereft of another perfon, as to make it equally an object of importance with our own. I was talking laft night with my old acquaintance, Will Threadbare, on this very fubject, at the Queen's Arms in St. Paul's Church-yard; when Will related over the hiftory of his friendfhips to me for the ninety-ninth time, and concluded with his ufual invective againft all the world, and the little confidence which is to be placed in the honour or honefty of any man. To fave him the trouble of repeating his narrative again, I fhall take the liberty of making it the fubject of the prefent paper; more efpecially as I know the publication can be no way difagreeable to him, and may probably prove of fome entertainment to my readers.

FROM my very infancy up, Mr. Babler, fays Will, I found that all thofe attachments which we are weak enough to diftinguifh by the name of Friendfhip, were nothing more than the effects of our folly, or the confequence of our defign. A parity of fentiments always created an intimacy between a couple of rafcals, who, willing to believe that they were capable of feeling the exalted glow of a virtuous friendfhip, imagined they really did feel it; and having once flattered themfelves with this opinion, refted wonderfully pleafed with the fuperftructure, without ever examining the foundation upon which it was built.

When I was at Eaton, no two in the world could be more intimate; that is, in the language of the world, entertain a greater friendfhip for each other, than a fellow who now poffeffes one of the moft valuable employments in the kingdom, and your humble fervant. How often have we fwore that nothing fhould ever feparate us when we came into the great theatre of life, as actors for ourfelves! This regard we carried to fuch an excefs, that we have frequently boxed one another's battles, and always looked upon the leaft affront offered to either, as an unpardonable injury to both. But, alas! Mr. Babbler, one Whitfun-Monday the provoft, who was an old acquaintance of my father's, took me out in a chaife with him to a neighbouring gentleman's houfe; and as my friend was not treated with the fame diftinction, he grew envious of his Pylades, behaved intolerably cold at our next meeting, which I could not but obferve; and being perhaps a little too tart in my reproaches, he took an occafion to quarrel with me; the confequence of which was, that he and I never fpoke a word together after. This lad's efteem for me commenced firft of all from my dexterity in robbing orchards; an amufement of which he was particularly fond, and therefore could not help efteeming a temper that bore fo ftrong a refemblance to his own: but as the bafis of our regard was fo very trivial in itfelf, our friendfhip muft be fuppofed to have but a flender fupport; and therefore a mifunderftanding was but a matter of courfe.

At Oxford I commenced an everlafting friendfhip, to be fure, with Ned Guzzle, becaufe I was unalterably attached to the bottle myfelf, and he was reckoned the hardeft drinker in the univerfity. Our everlafting friendfhip, however, continued but fix weeks; for a couple of unlucky rogues pitted us againft one another to drink for a rump of beef and a dozen of Madeira, in which it being my fortune to fwallow half a pint more than my antagonift, he wrote me a letter, when he got up next evening, defiring that all manner of correfpondence might be dropped between us for the future.

When I came up to town, and got poffeffion of my little fortune, Dick Wildman and I were infeparable; we lodged in the fame houfe, fpent every evening at the fame tavern together, and retired every morning with a ftrumpet to the fame bagnio under the piazza. We were always coupled in our amours; and never attacked a milliner's apprentice, or a tradefman's wife, unlefs there were two to find us both employment in the fame family. This was not all; I once fought a duel for him behind Montague-Houfe, and ran the double chance both of the gallows and cold iron. Yet, fee the fatality attending all fublunary things!—

things!—Dick surprized me one morning in bed with one of the maids where we lodged, whom he had been soliciting for some time, though unknown to me; and was so offended at the unpardonable preference which the hussey gave me, that he instantly ordered his man to pack up his things, and decamped next day without saying a single syllable.

I could recount a variety of instances where my friendships were equally unsuccessful, though I never refused either my sword, or my purse, to any of those partners of my heart; but finding, by fatal experience, that no friendship is lasting which is not founded on virtue, and believing in my soul, that there is not a spark of virtue in any man alive, I am absolutely determined never to have another friendship, but to starve as decently as I can upon my seventy pounds a-year, and to repeat that admirable sentiment of Swift, when any well-behaved scoundrel makes me the smallest declaration of his esteem—

Whene'er a prating Rascal cries,
He is your dearest Friend—he lies;
To lose a guinea at piquet,
Would make him rave, blaspheme, and sweat,
Bring from his heart sincerer groans,
Than if he heard you broke your bones.

## Nº XXII. SATURDAY, JULY 9.

I Do not know any one circumstance so productive of disorder and confusion, as the general propensity among all ranks of people, when they meet in company, to be joyous, as it is called; nor any thing where, in the pursuit of pleasure, and the hope of spending an agreeable evening, they are so utterly mistaken in the means. I am led into this reflection, as well from the experience of my own younger days, as the universal confession of all my juvenile acquaintance of the present times, with whom I very frequently chat half an hour upon the subject; and as a discussion of this point may perhaps prove as pleasing to my readers as a discourse upon any other topic, I shall make a little narrative, which I had yesterday from my nephew, Harry Rattle, the substance of the ensuing paper.

I have often told my subscribers, that, though considerably on the wrong side of fifty, an unassuming air of gaiety and freedom still renders me tolerable to the society of the young people, and that there is seldom a day in which I have not a visit, or an invitation, from several to whom I might almost be a grandfather. Among the many by whom I am thus favourably distinguished, my sister Rattle's youngest son Harry treats me with a chearful familiarity, without ever transgressing the smallest bound of respect. There is a something in this young fellow, which, abstracted from his affinity to me, I cannot help admiring. An open ingenuity of carriage, mixed with a fund of excellent sense, are not the least of his accomplishments; he has read a great deal; and, what is infinitely more, he never took up an author without perfectly understanding him. As well as a compleat scholar, Harry is really a pretty gentleman, and possesses no less a good heart than a fine understanding. As my nephew's qualifications are very well known, it is impossible but every body must be fond of his company. This sometimes leads him into foibles; and, in spite of his good sense, an easiness of temper that cannot resist the solicitations of his friends, frequently runs him into errors, which, with all my partiality for him, I can by no means approve, notwithstanding the rogue would make any body overlook them by the self-accusing honesty and readiness of his own reflections. Whenever I get Harry for a subject of discourse, I scarce know how to end, I am so fond of dwelling upon what I cordially esteem. But, not to trespass upon the patience of my readers, who are no way interested in his qualities, it is high time I should proceed to the purpose I set out with, and assume the matter, instead of preaching on the man. Well, then, yesterday morning Harry called upon me about eleven, his face spiritless and pale, his lips livid and swoln, a visible fatigue spread all over his features, and his eyes sunk in his head. I began instantly to open at the young rogue, guessing justly enough at the cause of his appearance;

when

when he flopped into my great chair, and prevented all the ſeverity I intended to treat him with, by being conſiderably more ſevere upon himſelf.

"My dear Sir," ſays he, "I am not worth your anger; advice is thrown away upon me; I ſin againſt the conviction of my own reaſon, and am no leſs an obſtinate puppy, than a ridiculous fool. Why, laſt night again, notwithſtanding all my late reſolutions, Dick Bumper only aſked me a ſecond time to ſup with a few friends at his houſe, and though I was very ſenſible what the conſequence might inevitably prove, do you know that I had not fortitude enough to refuſe him? At four this morning we broke up, after the uſual manner, heartily weary of each other, fatigued to death with our entertainment, and utterly diſſatisfied with ourſelves.

"I wiſh, Sir, you would ſay ſomething on this ſubject, and point out the monſtrous abſurdity which generally prevails in a joyous evening. When a few friends meet together, inſtead of indulging a rational converſation, you hear of nothing but a toaſt and a ſong: the chairman calls in turn upon every one for his toaſt, and frequently puts us to a ſtand for the want of ſomething ſpirited and new. In this dilemma, obſcenity or prophanation is but too general a reſource; and it is no uncommon thing to hear men, of reputed underſtanding, extol the name of ſome public proſtitute, and ridicule the precepts of their God.

"The cuſtom of every man's ſinging in turn, is ſtill conſiderably more ridiculous, and commonly as prophane. At any of theſe joyous meetings, even I, who have a voice more diſagreeable than the grating of a gate upon hinges, and know no more of muſic than a Hottentot, can never get excuſed; but muſt make myſelf ridiculous in attempting what I am utterly incapable of, and diſturb the people who drive me moſt importunately on. How often have I been teazed to ſing by a number of my intimate acquaintance? and yet, the moment I began, there was no poſſibility of concealing their diſguſt; they whiſpered one another, gave a forced attention, or lolled inſipidly in their chairs, ſtroking the plaits of their ruffles, or playing with the chain of their watch; then longing impatiently till I had finiſhed, gave a faint bravo, and called out for a toaſt from the next member in rotation; whilſt I ſat frying the whole time, from a conſcious incapacity to pleaſe, and a ſtrange neceſſity of giving a general diſſatisfaction.

"Perhaps, Sir, no cuſtom in the world is ſo very dangerous or unpardonable as toaſting; it levels all diſtinction in conſtitutions, and obliges a man, in an indifferent ſtate of health, to drink as much as him that is bleſſed with the ſtrength of a Hercules. It is the immediate parent of noiſe and intoxication; and, amongſt people of the beſt ſenſe, anſwers no other purpoſe but to leave them without any ſenſe at all.

"How prepoſterous a notion is it, my dear Sir, to ſuppoſe our joyous ſocieties ſtimulated by the principles of true benevolence or real eſteem, when every man has a deſign upon the weakneſs or conſtitution of his friend, and puſhes the glaſs about for no other purpoſe but to prejudice his health, and deſtroy his underſtanding! nay, when we make it our chiefeſt glory to have drank him out of all knowledge of order, all regard for himſelf, and all veneration for his God; when we reduce him to a ſtate of abſolute phrenzy and ſtupefaction, and either expoſe him to the numberleſs quarrels attending the firſt, or the multitude of accidents peculiar to the laſt, of theſe ſituations—But, Sir, I want to acquaint you with an affair of ſome conſequence."

Here Harry heſitated; and here I poſtpone the account of this affair till my next paper.

## Nº XXIII. SATURDAY, JULY 16.

I Shall now reſume the ſubject of my foregoing paper, and ſhew one of the many thouſand ill conſequences which proceed from the modern method of being *joyous*, and the illiberal indulgence of the glaſs, at the moſt friendly of our general entertainments.

The matter of conſequence which my nephew

nephew Harry wanted to acquaint me with, was the following note, which he received from Mr. Bumper, (at whose house he had spent the preceding evening) just as he was stepping out to chat half an hour with me at my chambers.

TO H. RATTLE, ESQ.

SIR,

LAST night you refused drinking Kitty Edwards, who was my toast, and on that occasion offered several new-fashioned arguments in support of your behaviour, which testified nothing more than a peculiarity of temper, but did no very great credit to the acknowledged goodness of your understanding. After you had refused my toast, no gentleman in company once asked you to drink his, though all took notice of your unaccountable singularity. The regard I must entertain for my own honour, and the respect which is due to my friends, oblige me to request an interview at the Bedford by one, to demand an explanation of this affair, which I was last night hindered from enquiring into, by my fears of disturbing the company and the consideration of my own house. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

RICHARD BUMPER.

I had no sooner read the letter, than Harry cried out—'You see, Sir, the 'consequence of being an advocate 'for common sense. Here I must have 'my throat cut for refusing to drink 'the health of an infamous strumpet; 'or, in vindication of my conduct, cut 'the throat of my friend. What would 'you advise me to do? The time draws 'on; and I would not have Mr. Bumper 'wait a moment for the universe!'—'Why, Harry,' says I, 'go instantly and hear what the gentleman has 'to say; but be sure remember that your 'life is not to be set at stake for a glass 'of wine, or an abandoned woman, little 'regard soever as Mr. Bumper may 'entertain for his; and, let matters 'turn out as they will, come back as 'soon as possible, and tell me the consequence of your interview.' Harry promised a punctual observance of my advice and request; and accordingly came back in a couple of hours after, and related the substance of his conversation with Mr. Bumper; which, for the greater ease of my readers, I shall set down as it was spoken, inserting the name of the speaker at the same time in the margin.

*Rattle.* MR. Bumper, your most obedient. I am come, pursuant to a note you have honoured me with this morning, written in a very unexpected as well as extraordinary stile, to know in what manner I have been unhappy enough to give you the least offence.

*Bumper.* The question is utterly unnecessary, Mr. Rattle; the manner of offending me is plainly enough declared in my letter, and nothing remains now to be discused but the motive.

*Rattle.* This will not take us up much time, Sir; for, be assured, I had not the least motive for offending you at all.

*Bumper.* This is very odd, Mr. Rattle! Why, then, did you refuse my toast?

*Rattle.* Because I saw no reason why, if Mr. Bumper would disgrace his understanding, that I should offer a palpable indignity to mine. I have been too long the slave of company and custom; but, for the future, am determined never to testify so public a mark of respect, as a toast for any man or woman who are justly the universal objects of detestation or contempt. To drink the health of a rascal is an approbation of his conduct; and a toast to the name of an infamous woman destroys any merit that can dwell upon a glass, in compliment to a valuable one.

*Bumper.* These (with a sneer) cynical sentiments may do very well in speculation, Mr. Rattle; but give me leave to assert, with all possible deference to the superiority of your boasted understanding, that the practice will be somewhat difficult; and furthermore, let me add, that you will be frequently liable to explain this ridiculous deviation from the general rules of company, or reduced to a necessity of keeping no company at all.

*Rattle.* (briskly) And be assured, Mr. Bumper, I never shall regret the loss of that company which looks upon common sense as an enemy to it's mirth or institution.

*Bumper.* But don't you think, Sir, that the refusal of a toast may be justly considered an actual disrespect to the giver?

giver? and that, upon that occaſion, he has a right, by the rules of cuſtom, to call the refuſer to an account?

*Rattle.* Sir, you may call any man to an account when you will. But conſider whether reaſon juſtifies or condemns the proceeding.—Come, come, Mr. Bumper, it is not for you and I to make a ſerious affair of a trifle; I again repeat, that I had no notion of offending you; and I fancy you can recollect inſtances enough where my veracity has not admitted of a diſpute. I am ſorry to ſee you ſo warm upon this occaſion; but let me aſk your heart, if it thinks the refuſal of drinking a ſtrumpet's health a crime that deſerves the murder of your friend?

*Bumper.* Sir, it is not the diſreſpect offered to her, but to myſelf.

*Rattle.* (interrupting) Then you own that ſhe is not worth quarrelling for; and yet make yourſelf ſo much a part of her, as to run the moſt extravagant lengths in her defence.—My dear Bumper, you may ſee from this the impropriety of all toaſting; for you might as well run me through the body, for not falling in love with any woman you think proper to mention, as be offended at my refuſing to drink her health. The queſtion is not to be decided by the laws of cuſtom, but by the rules of reaſon; and what a figure muſt a man make in any argument, where he denies truth and underſtanding a liberty to judge!—Upon the whole, Dick, if you are determined to cut my throat, you muſt: but do not commit an unneceſſary murder to convince me of what I am already convinced, that you have ſpirit enough to reſent a real injury; nor ſeek out imaginary provocations to ſhew how ready you would be in chaſtiſing an abſolute affront.

Here the affair happily terminated much to the honour of both parties, who are now warmer friends than ever, and afford, by the propriety of their reconciliation, a ſenſible leſſon to the giddily-ſpirited part of the public.

## N° XXIV. SATURDAY, JULY 23.

### TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

GREAT an oppoſition as there ſeems between vanity and meanneſs, yet, if we take but ever ſo curſory a view of the world, we ſhall find them to be pretty general companions, and ſcarcely meet a ſingle inſtance in which there can be diſcovered any ſhadow of exception. Among my own ſex particularly, Mr. Babler, vanity is the parent of ſo many meanneſſes, that I am actually ſurprized, when we endeavour to give ourſelves moſt conſequence, that we never perceive how we forfeit all the dignity we juſt before poſſeſſed; and in the ridiculous attempt of arrogating our own importance, leave ourſelves, in ſhort, without any real importance at all.

This is never more the caſe, Sir, than when we liſten to the ſolicitations of your ſex; and, for the ſake of a deſpicable compliment to our teeth or our complexion, overlook the unpardonable affront which it generally conveys, and take no notice of the very poor opinion it inſinuates, both for the purity of our hearts, and the rectitude of our underſtandings. We ſuffer the moſt illiberal addreſſes to be paid us, if they are but ſoftened with the words Angel and Goddeſs; and admit a deſigning villain as often as he pleaſes into our preſence, though we know our ruin and diſgrace are the only objects of his purſuit, if he but praiſes the colour of our hair, and tells us we are poſſeſſed of finer eyes than the reſt of our acquaintance. In ſhort, Sir, we are willing a man ſhould think there is a probability of our launching into infamy and proſtitution, for the ſake of hearing our perſons commended; and perfectly reconciled, while he treats us on a footing with the handſomeſt women he may know, to his thinking, that in time he ſhall number us with the very worſt.

A woman, Sir, whenever ſhe is told of her beauty with a grave face, ſhould firſt of all conſider the purpoſe for which ſhe may be addreſſed in this manner, and reflect upon the motive which may actuate the perſon who profeſſes himſelf ſo ſenſible of her perfections. Nothing is more dangerous than to ſuffer continued repetitions of this ſtile; it gradually

dually becomes more and more pleafing to the ear; and there is, befides, too natural a promptitude in the female mind to think favourably of thofe who feem to think paffionately of us. A language of this nature, therefore, fhould be highly alarming to our ears; for many a woman, who thought herfelf impregnable, has, in a length of time, grown fo enamoured of her own praife, that fhe could not poffibly exift without the perfon who adminiftered it, and has at laft made a furrender at difcretion; when, had fhe firft of all capitulated on terms, fhe might have infifted on the very beft.

Let us only reduce the general tendency of modern addreffes into plain Englifh, Mr. Babler, and afk the moft indifcreet of the fex, if they can, in their confcience, difcover them to be a jot better than this—'Madam, I look upon you as a fool, and one whom I have a ftrong inclination to make a ftrumpet; for which reafon I intend to talk continually of your charms, and, by facrificing in that manner to your vanity, I have no doubt but, in a few days, I fhall bring you to an utter difregard of morality and virtue, to an abfolute contempt of all the laudable fentiments which you have been imbibing fo many years, and a total indifference for your own reputation, and the honour of your fex. As I think your wickednefs equal to your folly, I beg, when I mention the word *beauty*, that you will prefer the gratification of the man who is your greateft enemy, to the peace of thofe who are your unalterable friends; nor hefitate a moment to break the heart of a parent that tenderly loves you, to pleafe an infamous fcoundrel who labours for your everlafting difgrace. In fhort, Madam, I expect, in return for a paltry compliment to your perfon, that you fcruple not to endure continual fhame in this world, nor fhrink at hazarding your eternal happinefs in the next; but run at once to plunge a dagger into the breaft of your father, and hurl an impious defiance at the very throne of your God.'

I had myfelf, Mr. Babler, lately two or three lovers, who kindly faid very pretty things to my perfon; and, would you believe it, that one of them was a married man?—This gentleman came one day with all the eafy impudence in life, and with as much compofure as if he had been really performing a meritorious action, threw himfelf at my feet, and fwore he could not live unlefs I pitied him. Had I a dagger, I believe I fhould have ftuck it in the villain's heart: however, affuming all the anger I poffibly could, in a face not naturally the moft placid, I mentioned fome thoughts of paying a vifit to his wife, which effectually banifhed him from my prefence without doing the fmalleft injury to his health, or difturbing in the leaft the ufual ferenity of his temper.

A lord next told me I was the moft angelic piece of flefh and blood he had ever beheld; and folicited, in good earneft, that I would blefs him with my favourable opinion; but I had no fooner talked of coronets on my coach, than the truly honourable earl fneaked inftantly off, excufing himfelf on account of a treaty then in agitation with Lady Betty Squander.

What you men think of us, Mr. Babler, I know not; nor, indeed, can I conceive what we women in general think of ourfelves: but of this I am abfolutely certain, that while we continue fo intolerably vain, we muft be liable to an infinity of meanneffes; and that the fureft way for any woman to be undone, is to think there is nobody comparable to herfelf.

## N° XXV. SATURDAY, JULY 30.

OF all the requifites effentially neceffary to form a matrimonial felicity, a parity of ages may poffibly be the very firft; and if we were to take a nice furvey of the various difproportioned matches which unhappily might be found within the Weekly Bills, the endlefs anxieties fubfifting between each, would be fufficient to frighten any prudent parent from beftowing his daughter's hand where there was not fome equality of years; and at leaft a probability that her reafon would in time reconcile her to a hufband who, perhaps, might not at firft be the object of her choice.

I am

I am very well aware, that many a careful father, and antiquated lover, will be apt to exclaim against this assertion: the first, from an œconomical consideration of the main chance; and the latter, from a natural insensibility which every man entertains for his own imperfections and infirmities. But could the one be brought to a belief that wealth, at the best of times, is a very precarious foundation for happiness; and the other be only prevailed upon to throw self aside for a moment or two, extraordinary as the position may seem on a partial consideration; both would nevertheless allow it to be of no little force.

Casual aversions may be lessened, in time, by an invariable tenderness, and an unexceptionable conduct in a husband. Personal defects, by being habitual to the eye, gradually lessen on the imagination, and, by an uninterrupted familiarity, very frequently cease to be disagreeable, much more continue to give perpetual disgust: but a disparity of years is an obstacle never to be surmounted; every day gives it an additional force; and, contrary to the general nature of all other evils, (for in this case we must inevitably call it an evil) instead of being mitigated by the lenient hand of time, it becomes every moment more and more incapable of alleviation or cure.

But, besides the long train of disagreeable reflections which the bare circumstance of age is of itself capable of exciting in the bosom of any young woman, the innumerable list of diseases, which are it's inseparable attendants, occasion still stronger aversion; and, in reality, a young lady has but too much ground for anxiety and distress when she considers herself as a sacrifice to some venerable dotard; and, instead of the reasonable pleasures she might justly promise herself upon entering the world as a wife, sees nothing before her but the gloomy prospect of becoming a nurse to an emaciated wretch, worn away with the consequences of juvenile intemperance, and absolutely dying with gouts, palsies, rheumatisms, coughs, and catarrhs.

Contradictions so very opposite as extreme youth and age, there is hardly a possibility of reconciling. A fine sprightly girl, of nineteen or twenty, must naturally wish for amusements adapted to her time of life, and languish for such enjoyments as are naturally repugnant to the sentiments, as well as the infirmities, of crazy fourscore. The situation of such a couple is easily imagined; the lady must be continually unhappy at being thus debarred, after the sacrifice she has made, from every entertainment suitable to her temper and her years; and the gentleman as constantly miserable at possessing an impotent authority, productive of nothing but eternal suspicions of her conduct, and the sharpest reflections on his own.

It is in vain to expect that the rectitude of a woman's education, thus circumstanced, or the excellence of her understanding, will be a means of procuring even a tolerable tranquillity or content; the more understanding she possesses, the more she must despise the self-interested dotard, who was utterly regardless of her inclinations; who, in all probability, used his utmost influence with a misguided and inexorable parent, to tear her from some deserving young fellow on whom her soul was unalterably fixed; and, perhaps, had her dragged to the bridal bed, like another Niobe, stiffening into horror, or dissolving in her tears.

In a situation of this nature, how a man can be weak enough to look for tenderness or affection from any young lady, is to me a miracle: nor am I less surprized how he can think of exciting her gratitude, by indulging her in trivial points, when he has so infamously injured her in the most capital of all; her everlasting hatred and abhorrence are the only returns he can reasonably look for; and if there is a possibility for her to view him with less than an insuperable contempt, I am satisfied he must look upon her as a creature utterly divested of sensibility and soul, and view her with an absolute contempt himself.

An infinity of reasons might be urged against the disparity of age in matrimonial connections; but as I have lately received a story on this subject which will set this affair in a stronger light than a volume of declamatory arguments, I shall conclude the subject for the present with this observation, that he who marries a woman whom he knows has an attachment for another man, must look for wretchedness; and he that marries a woman contrary to her inclination, in reality deserves it.

## Nº XXVI. SATURDAY, AUGUST 6.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I AM one of thoſe unhappy old blockheads whoſe paſſions out-live the power of indulgence, and are perpetually dreaming of a marriage-bed, inſtead of thinking ſeriouſly about the purchaſe of a winding-ſheet. I am turned of ſixty-five, worn away to a ſkeleton by a variety of diſeaſes, the conſequence of my youthful indiſcretion; and am almoſt ſix months married to an amiable unhappy woman juſt bordering on twenty-two.

Being laſt Eaſter, Sir, at my ſon's in the country, I accidentally ſaw a young lady who was intimately acquainted with my grand-daughter Sally; and whom, on enquiry, I found to be the daughter of a curate lately ſettled in thoſe parts, who had nothing to maintain a wife and four children but a ſlender forty pounds a year. Maria, the young lady's name in queſtion, was the eldeſt, and had no other fortune than a moſt engaging perſon, an irreſiſtible face, a good heart, and a fine underſtanding. Theſe, however, had procured her the addreſſes of one Mr. Markham, a very worthy young fellow in the neighbourhood, who had newly ſet up in the grocery trade, with a capital of 3000l. and who, by her father's permiſſion, and the conſent of his own friends, was to be married to her on the Sunday fortnight following.

There was a ſomething ſo engaging about Maria, Mr. Babler, as ſtrangely affected me, and made me at once both very uneaſy and very much aſhamed. All thoughts of an intercourſe with the ſex, at my time of life, I was ſenſible ſhould have totally ſubſided; yet, notwithſtanding a conviction of that nature, I was determined, if there was a poſſibility of my ſucceeding, to have her. In vain my ſon pointed out the ridicule I ſhould incur by ſo diſproportioned a match; in vain did my daughter, nay, my grand-daughter too, endeavour to laugh me out of ſo prepoſterous a deſign; and in vain did my own reflection dwell upon the ſtriking diſparity of years, and the greatneſs of my infirmities. My authority ſilenced the remonſtrances of my children, and my vanity turned a deaf ear to the ſelf-convicted poignancy of my own. The circumſtance of years, I thought, my generoſity would ſufficiently counterbalance; and as for my diſorders, I fancied my cough was conſiderably abated; and that, under a proper regimen, my gout might be rendered leſs troubleſome, and the rheum of my eyes totally removed. I ſent for an empiric to make me a handſome ſet of teeth; exchanged my venerable tye for a ſmart faſhionable bob, affected to read without ſpectacles, and threw by my crutch-headed ſtick.

Not to trouble you, Sir, Mr. Graſply, Maria's father, the moment I propoſed a jointure, was in a tranſport; a promiſe of providing for his other children threw him into an extaſy, and the reverſion of a good living on my own eſtate, rendered him incapable of ſpeaking a ſingle word. Maria, after a thouſand entreaties, and as many floods of tears, not to be ſacrificed, as ſhe called it, and a vain attempt of eſcaping to her dear Mr. Markham, was dragged to church in three days after, and came home Mrs. Totterly.

Having thus fortunately ſecured her for my wife, I thought my felicity almoſt compleated, and that the moment her tears were a little dried up, I ſhould be the happieſt of men. But, alas! Mr. Babler, I found a great difference betwixt the poſſeſſion of an unwilling hand, and the enjoyment of a warm reciprocally beating heart: it required but ſmall penetration to diſcover that I was the object of her unalterable averſion, and that the violence I had done to her real inclinations would plant perpetual thorns on her pillow, and fix everlaſting anxiety on mine.

I will not trouble you, Mr. Babler, with a repetition of particular circumſtances; ſuffice it, that notwithſtanding I have uſed every method I could poſſibly deviſe to excite her gratitude, or engage her eſteem, in the calmeſt of her moments, ſhe looks upon me with a rooted hatred, or a contemptuous diſguſt. I in vain tempt her with equipage and dreſs; if the carriage is ordered to the door, ſhe has the head-ach; and if I order home a freſh piece of ſilk, it is thrown neglected on the floor. Inſtead of mixing with ſociety, ſhe ſhuts herſelf up the principal part of the day in her cloſet; and if I chance by accident

dent to break in, I surprize her in tears. If my infirmities oblige me to the use of a separate bed, I am uneasy at being from her; and yet I am miserable by the horror she expresses in her looks, if they do not: if she chances to doze, the heaviness of her sighs distract me to the last degree; and if she mentions the word Markham in her dreams, as she frequently does, it is a scorpion of the most deadly nature, and stings me to the heart.

Upon the whole, Mr. Babler, asleep, or awake, at bed, or at board, I am the most miserable of men; and what, like a ridiculous dotard, I fancied would prove the greatest blessing of my life, by a just dispensation of Providence, turns out my unalterable curse. O Sir! to a man not altogether destitute of sensibility, what situation can be so truly wretched as mine? Without a friend to whom I can vent my griefs, without a bosom which I dare beg to pity my distress, to be despised by the woman I doat upon to madness, and to be a real object of contempt to myself, is too much! To be loaded with years, and so borne down with infirmities as to stand one continued mummy of emaciation, one complicated hoard of disease, is a dreadful reflection for a new married man!—a man totally incapable of inspiring a passion of the least tender nature, and as totally incapable of gratifying it, if he could!

From my story let other old dotards beware of following my example; for be assured, Mr. Babler, wherever there is a striking disparity of years, and the odds against the man, a very little time will convince him of his error; and make him wish, with me, that he had sent for an undertaker, and been buried fifty fathom quick before he made so preposterous a choice of a wife. I am, Sir, &c.

CHARLES TOTTERLY.

## N° XXVII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 13.

I SUPPED last night at my sister Rattle's, where the discourse turning upon the education of children, my favourite Harry related a little story, with which I was prodigiously affected; and as it conveys a very pretty moral, I shall make no apology for presenting it to my readers.

" A worthy old gentleman, who had by an inflexible industry acquired a large fortune, with great reputation, at length declining business, devoted his sole attention to the settlement of an only son, of whom he was uncommonly fond. In a little time he married him to a woman of family; and judging of the son's affection by his own, made over every shilling he was worth to the young gentleman, desiring nothing more than to be a witness of his happiness in the same house, and depending upon his gratitude for any cursory trifle he might want for the private use of his purse. The son had not been married however above six weeks, before he was under the sole dominion of his wife, and prevailed upon to treat the old gentleman with the most mortifying neglect. If he wanted the carriage for an airing, why, truly—' My Lady has engaged ' it.' If he desired to mix in any little party of pleasure, They were quite full. He was suffered to sit whole evenings without being once spoken to; at table he was obliged to call three or four times for a glass of wine, or a bit of bread; and if he ever entered into a narrative of any transaction which occurred in his youth, his obliging daughter-in-law immediately broke in upon him, and politely introduced a conversation upon something else. This unpardonable contempt was at last carried to such a degree, that his cough was complained of as troublesome; and under a pretence that his tobacco-box was insupportable, he was requested to eat in his own room.

" Four or five years passed on in this manner, which were rendered a little tolerable by the birth of a grandson, a most engaging boy, who, from the moment he was capable of distinguishing, seemed to be very fond of the old gentleman; and, by an almost instinctive attachment, appeared as if providentially designed to atone for the unnatural ingratitude of it's father. He was now turned of four; when one day some persons of fashion dining at the house, the old gentleman, who knew nothing of the company, came down into the back-parlour to enquire for his little favourite, who had been two whole hours out of his apartment: he had no sooner opened the door, than his dutiful son, before a room full of people, asked him how he dare break in upon him without leave, and desired him to get in-

 stantly

ſtantly up about his buſineſs. The old gentleman withdrew, according to order, returned to his own room, and gave a very hearty freedom to his tears.

"Little Tommy, who could not bear to hear his grand-papa chided at ſuch a rate, followed him inſtantly; and obſerving how heartily he ſobbed, came roaring down to the parlour, and before the whole company bawled out—'Papa has 'made poor grand-papa break his heart; 'he will cry his eyes out above ſtairs.' The ſon, who was really aſhamed of his conduct, eſpecially as he ſaw no ſign of approbation in the faces of his friends, endeavoured to put an eaſy appearance on the affair, and brazen it out; turning round, therefore, to the child, he deſired him to carry a blanket to grand-papa, and bid him go beg. 'Ay, but I will 'not give him all the blanket,' returned the child. 'Why ſo, my dear?' ſays the father. 'Becauſe,' anſwered he, 'I ſhall want half for you, when I 'grow up to be a man, and turn you 'out of doors.' The child's reproof ſtung the father to the ſoul, and held up at once both the cruelty and ingratitude of his conduct in their proper dyes: nay, the wife ſeemed affected, and wanted words. A good-natured tear dropped from more than one of the company, who ſeized this opportunity of condemning, in a very candid manner, their behaviour to ſo affectionate a father, and ſo bountiful a friend; and, in ſhort, made them ſo heartily aſhamed of themſelves, that the old gentleman was immediately ſent for by both, who, in the preſence of all, moſt humbly entreated his forgiveneſs for every thing paſt, and promiſed the buſineſs of their lives would be to oblige him for the future. The poor old gentleman's joy threatened now to be much more fatal than his affliction a little before: he looked upon his ſon and daughter for ſome time with a mute aſtoniſhment, mixed with a tenderneſs impoſſible to be deſcribed; and then, fixing his eyes upon the company with a wildneſs of inconceivable rapture, ſnatched up his little Tommy to his boſom, who joined him in a hearty flood of tears."

There is nothing, in reality, where people are ſo very wrong, as the education of children, though there is nothing in which they ought to be more abſolutely certain of being right. If we ſeriouſly reflect upon the cuſtomary method in which children are brought up, we muſt almoſt imagine, that the generality of parents inculcate principles of religion and virtue into their offspring, for the mere ſatisfaction of bringing both religion and virtue into contempt; and paint the precepts of morality in the moſt engaging colours, to ſhew, by their practice, how much theſe precepts are to be deſpiſed.

My friend, Ned Headſtrong, is a parent of this caſt; he is continually preaching up a rectitude of conduct to a very ſenſible young fellow his ſon; and yet as continually deſtroying, by his example, what he labours to effect by his advice. Ned expatiates largely about patience under the diſpenſations of Providence, and yet will fly into a paſſion of the moſt ungovernable nature, if a leg of mutton is boiled a minute too much. I have heard him launch forth in the praiſe of fortitude, while he has not been able to overcome the chagrin occaſioned by ſpilling a drop of port upon the table-cloth; and very frequently liſtened to a lecture againſt a profligate mention of the Divine name, interſperſed with a variety of horrid execrations.

The ſame prepoſterous inconſiſtency in the education of an only daughter is a diſtinguiſhing peculiarity of Lady Dye Dawdle. Her ladyſhip is no great gadabout, for ſhe lies in bed all the day, and plays at cards all night; ſhe cannot be accuſed of miſbehaviour in church, for I do not ſuppoſe ſhe has been once at a place of public worſhip theſe twenty years. A tradeſman can never call twice at her houſe for a bill; for there is not one, who has the leaſt acquaintance with her character, that would truſt her with a yard of ribband, or a row of pins. Her reputation has never been ſuſpected, for there is not a man in England who would think it worth his while to accept of the higheſt favour ſhe could poſſibly grant; and as for her veracity, that can by no means admit of a debate, for it is a queſtion with me if ſhe ſpoke a ſyllable of truth ſince her arrival at maturity. Yet, notwithſtanding all theſe negative perfections, ſhe is continually preſcribing a contrary practice to her daughter, and perpetually condemning the young lady for the leaſt imitation of what ſhe is unceaſingly practiſing herſelf.

I ſhall conclude this paper with a bit of advice addreſſed to every order of my readers. If a parent in reality would have his ſon a good man, let him teach by his practice, as much as by his pre-

precept;

precept; and never, through a doating partiality, overlook those actions in a child which he would inevitably condemn in any body else. Finally, let all parents, from the introductory part of this paper, consider that it is no disgrace for a son to be dependent on a father's bounty, but that nothing can be more dangerous than for a father to be dependent on a son's.

## Nº XXVIII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 20.

THERE is no set of men to whom I have a greater aversion than your professed sayers of *bon mots*, or sputterers of *good things*; who go into company for no other reason in nature, but to catch at every little opportunity of being smart, and build a reputation of wit and vivacity upon the harmless peculiarities, or casual indiscretions, of their acquaintance. This species of impertinents, if we properly examine the principles upon which they act, are not more to be despised for the continual air of self-sufficiency they assume, than for the malevolence of their dispositions, in wishing to disconcert, where real good-nature and true politeness should be studious to oblige. Yet, notwithstanding the greatest number of these worthy gentlemen affect a superiority of understanding above the rest of the world, a sensible observer will find, that the very best is seldom more than a squirt charged with the trite relations of despicable jest-books and common-place remarks, to be let off as occasion may arise, in whatever company it may be their fortune to be introduced.

As the vanity of being admired engrosses their whole ambition, a wit of this class is not less a disagreeable acquaintance than a dangerous friend: he is incapable of confidence; and wherever a secret of the most important nature with which he is trusted, may unhappily interfere with an opportunity of gratifying his natural propensity, his discretion is in an instant kicked down stairs by his pride, and the peace of a whole family, in all probability, sacrificed to an indelicate repartee, or an ignorant joke. Nay, no consideration, either moral or religious, is able to restrain the torrent of his impertinence; and is it not too common a circumstance, that where human obligations afford him no subject of exercising his talents, that he bursts at once through the most awful of the divine, and circulates a daring laugh at the mandates of his God! In short, the most bearable of this fraternity is always a plague to society, and not very seldom a disgrace.

Should we carry our speculations on this subject still farther, it might probably be found, that one half of our modern infidels is produced by the absurd affection of saying a good thing, and the desire of being thought uncommonly shrewd by the generality of the world. In order to effect this, a singularity of opinion is first of all adopted; and the more dangerous this opinion is, the more it answers the purpose of being talked of, and renders the person who adopts it pointed out from the ordinary classes of mankind. This singularity of sentiment of course occasions a singularity of expression; and the consequence at last is, that the unhappy wretch, who thus aims at universal admiration, jests himself out of every sensible and worthy man's esteem here, and laughs away his hopes of hereafter too.

An old school-fellow of mine, poor Dick Brazen, is one of those men whose principal study is to attract the attention of their acquaintance by a smartness of repartee, and a poignancy of satire in the application of a joke. Dick's whole labour, these forty years, has been to make himself a very disagreeable companion; and I cannot help saying he has been no way disappointed in his end. The moment he enters a room, and makes his bow, he sits with the utmost patience to catch at any expression which may admit of a sarcasm; and is sure, without any regard to the condition or sex of the speaker, to use his best endeavours to turn it into ridicule or contempt. If nothing of this kind happens, he makes himself the hero of some little tale, and perhaps tells a hundred impertinent stories for the sake of relating what he said upon such and such a circumstance; how he put Lady Thisthing out of countenance, with an observation upon a pincushion; and cut up Sir John T'other, with a stroke upon a snuff-

snuff-box. The worst of all is, the same observation which that celebrated reprobate, the Earl of Rochester, made on Charles the Second, for the continual repetition of his stories, may, with all imaginable justice, be applied to Mr. Brazen. That monarch had a custom of telling every day, in the circle, a thousand trifling occurrences of his youth, and would constantly repeat them over and over again, without the smallest variation; so that such of his courtiers as were acquainted with his majesty's foible, would instantly retreat whenever he began any of his narrations. My Lord Rochester being with him one day, took the liberty of being very severe upon that head—'Your majesty,' says he, 'has undoubtedly the best memory in the world; I have heard you repeat the same story, without the variation of a syllable, every day these ten years; but what I think extraordinary is, that you never recollect you generally tell it to the same set of auditors.' This is Mr. Brazen's fault, and indeed the fault of every worthy member of his brotherhood; they are very happy in remembering every good thing they have said, but constantly forget they have retailed it perhaps five hundred times upon the same company.

I shall conclude this paper with an anecdote of the identical Mr. Brazen, whom I have thus taken the liberty of introducing to my readers, and which I think is a general picture of all the clever fellows of this class within the bills of mortality. Being carried to sup one night, by a friend, with a company of very sensible people whom he had never seen before, Dick was so very much pleased, that he was extremely mortified, or, in other words, found no opportunity of exercising his talent for *bon mots*. Being asked to the same party a second time—'No, no,' says he, 'I have been disappointed already, and will never sit twice in a company which I cannot laugh at, by G—d.'

## Nº XXIX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 27.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THERE is no necessity so lamentable as where a truly sensible and good man is obliged, from the tyranny of custom, to run into those actions which he both despises and abhors; and is reduced to the dreadful alternative of entailing infamy on his name for life, or bursting at once through the laws of his country, and violating the commands of his God. You will easily apprehend that I intend to trouble you on the fatal consequences of duelling. I do, Sir; and have a tale to unfold that must drench your humanity in tears.

I am the wretched relict of the most amiable of men. Three months ago I was the happiest of my sex!—What am I now?—But you shall hear, Sir. I am a young woman of twenty three, and about five years ago married a most deserving young man of fortune, equal to my own, by whom I have four children, every one (if the doating fondness of a mother may be credited) the little emblem of it's ever to be regretted father.

During the little space of our marriage, Mr. Wellworth seemed to live for no other purpose but to oblige me; and I hope it will not be looked upon as vanity, if I say, my everlasting study was to make every thing agreeable to him. In short, Sir, I scarcely imagined a hereafter could add to my felicity, nor formed a single wish beyond the approbation of my husband.

One evening, Sir, Mr. Wellworth supped abroad with a party of friends, and came home with a good-humour which was visibly constrained. However, as he repeatedly assured me that nothing was the matter, I rather accused myself of unnecessary apprehension, than supposed he was really disturbed. That evening he was more than usually tender to me, and paid an extraordinary attention to the children; he went up to the nursery, kissed each separately three or four times, and blessed them with an uncommon energy of expression. We retired in a little time after; and judge my distraction, Mr. Babler, when my woman woke me in the morning with the following letter!—

MY ADORABLE MARIA,

BEFORE this reaches your hands, I am no more. Last night Colonel Melmoth and I had a difference about political

political opinions: he challenged, and laid me under the diſagreeable neceſſity of giving him the meeting. Pity me, my only love. What could I do?—Shame, diſgrace, and infamy, hung upon my name, if I refuſed; though, now that the awful proſpect of eternity opens upon my imagination, I could wiſh the circumſtance undone. An all-gracious, an all-forgiving Deity, will, I humbly hope, however, prove more merciful than a relentleſs world; and therefore a crime, which from the weakneſs of humanity, and the unhappy cuſtom of my country, I was in a manner forced to, may poſſibly meet with forgiveneſs above. But muſt I leave my children?—Muſt I be torn for ever from my wife?—O Maria! is it poſſible to imagine how I have loved?—In life you were the only miſtreſs of my heart; in death you poſſeſs it wholly too! My ſtrength fails—Colonel Melmoth lies dead!—O Maria! take care of our helpleſs little innocents; and be ſure, when Charley grows up, to inculcate ſuch principles in his mind as may make him avoid the raſhneſs of his father, and ſacrifice every conſideration to the mandates of his God. And now an everlaſting adieu.—And may the eternal Father of Mercy ſhower down his choiceſt bleſſings on you, and my poor babes, is the dying prayer of your own

CHARLES WELLWORTH.

What became of me for a whole fortnight after the receipt of this dreadful letter, Mr. Babler, I cannot pretend to tell. My mother ſays I was in a ſtate of abſolute diſtraction, and frequently made attempts upon my own life. However, by degrees, they reduced me to ſomething like tranquillity, and argued me into a reſolution to live, through a conſideration for my children.

Such, Sir, are the conſequences of duelling: from being the moſt fortunate wife in the univerſe, I have nothing in my imagination now but a ſlaughtered huſband; and from being the happieſt mother in the world, I cannot ſee my little orphans without inconceivable anguiſh and diſtreſs. O, Sir, is this falſe, this ridiculous punctilio of honour, to be ſupported not only with the loſs of the parties lives, but with the ruin of their families? Why will not gentlemen conſider that their raſhneſs not only expoſes their own breaſts to the ſword of their adverſaries, hut plants it in the boſom of their friends? A man with a wife and children, Sir, (abſtracted from any conſideration of a religious nature) has no right to be laviſh of his ſafety; his life is the property of his family, and is abſolutely neceſſary for their defence. I wiſh, Sir, the legiſlative power would take ſome ſteps to prevent this horrid cuſtom, and make it an object of their contempt, as well as the mark of their reſentment; till this is done, puniſhment will be ineffectual; and O that it may be ſpeedily done, is the hearty wiſh of yours, &c.

MARIA WELLWORTH.

## Nº XXX. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3.

THERE is nothing at which I am more offended than the unpardonable vein of ignorance and brutality ſo generally introduced in our Drinking Songs; nor any thing, in my opinion, which throws a greater reflection upon the underſtanding of a ſenſible ſociety. If we examine the principal number of theſe pretty compoſitions, we ſhall find that abſolute intoxication is recommended as the higheſt felicity in the world, and receive the moſt poſitive aſſurances of being upon an equality with angels, the very moment we ſink ourſelves into a ſituation conſiderably lower than men.

To look back to the original deſign of all poetical compoſition is needleſs, ſince every body knows that it was to praiſe and honour the Supreme Being with a fervency of devotion, which could not be found in the common form of words. This glorification of the Deity, and the inſtruction of his creatures, appearing therefore to be the grand view of poetry, how much is it to be lamented, that a ſcience of ſo ſublime a nature ſhould be proſtituted to ſuch infamous ends; and, inſtead of being applied to the purpoſes of religion and virtue, be directed to the ſupport of a vice productive of innumerable ills!

It has been juſtly obſerved, that every nation,

nation, in proportion as it is civilized, has abolished intemperance in wine, and consequently must be barbarous in proportion as it is addicted to excess. The remark, I am rather apprehensive, will be found no very great compliment to the people of this kingdom; we are apt to place good fellowship in riot, and have but too natural a promptitude in imagining, that the happiness of an evening is promoted by an extravagant circulation of the glass: hence are our songs of festivity (as I have already taken notice) fraught with continual encomiums on the pleasures of intoxication, and the whole tribe of Bacchanalian Lyrics perpetually telling us how wonderfully sensible it is to destroy our senses, and how nothing can be more rational in a human creature, than to drink till he has not left himself a single glimmer of reason at all.

But if, abstracted from the brutal intention of our drinking songs in general, we should come to consider their merit as literary performances, how very few of them should we find worth a station on a cobler's stall, or deserving the attention of an auditory at Billingsgate! The best are but so many despicable strings of unmeaning puns and ill-imagined conceits, and betray not more the ignorance of their encouragers, than the barrenness of their authors. Let me only ask the warmest advocate for this species of composition, what, upon a cool reflection, he thinks of the following song—

BY the gaily-circling glass,
We can see how minutes pass:
By the hollow cask we're told,
How the waining night grows old:
Soon, too soon, the busy day,
Calls us from our sports away:
What have we with day to do?
Sons of Care, 'twas made for you.

The foregoing little song, though one of the least offensive in the whole round of a *bon vivant* collection, has neither thought nor expression to recommend it; and can, when sung, be termed no more than an agreeable piece of impertinence, calculated to supply a want of understanding in a company. I forbear to mention the Big-bellied Bottle, and a variety of similar productions, which are universally known, and deserve to be as universally despicable; but I shall conclude this paper, however, with a song which I would recommend as an example to such gentlemen as are fond of celebrating the grape, though no ways ambitious to do it at the expence of good sense and morality.

THE JUDICIOUS BACCHANAL.

WHILE the bottle to humour and social delight
The smallest assistance can lend;
While it happily keeps up the laugh of the night,
Or enlivens the mind of a friend:

O let me enjoy it, ye bountiful powers!
That my time may deliciously pass;
And should Care ever think to intrude on my hours,
Scare the haggard away with a glass.

But, instead of a rational feast of the sense,
Should Discord preside o'er the bowl;
And Folly debate, or Contention commence,
From too great an expansion of soul:

Should the man I esteem, or the friend of my breast,
In the ivy, feel nought but the rod;
Should I make sweet Religion a profligate jest,
And daringly sport with my God—

From my lips dash the poison, O merciful Fate!
Where the madness or blasphemy hung;
And let every accent which virtue should hate,
Parch quick on my infamous tongue.

From my sight let the curse be eternally driv'n,
Where my reason so fatally stray'd;
That no more I may offer an insult to Heav'n,
Or give man a cause to upbraid.

## Nº XXXI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10.

AN eaſineſs of behaviour through the common occurrences of life, is a point in which almoſt every perſon thinks himſelf an admirable proficient; yet it is nevertheleſs a matter in which almoſt every perſon is very widely deceived. We are all of us too apt to miſtake the groſſeſt extremities for the criterion of perfection; and ſeldom imagine that we have reached the neceſſary goal of good-breeding, till we have left it at an aſtoniſhing diſtance behind.

An endeavour at an extraordinary degree of politeneſs, is a rock upon which numbers are perpetually ſplitting; and, what is moſt ſurpriſing, the variety of examples, inſtead of deterring us from an imitation of the practice, are rather additional incentives for the continuation of the purſuit. Naturally prompt to think we ourſelves poſſeſs more abilities than our neighbours, we are perpetually ſolicitous for their being diſplayed; and confining our obſervations for ever to the agreeable ſide of things, we abſolutely forget that they have the ſmalleſt reverſe.

Mrs. Notable, an old widow couſin of my own, is the very quinteſſence of modern politeneſs and good-nature. Once every Chriſtmas I have the honour of an invitation among a great number of other relations, and then have a perfect opportunity of contemplating the elaborate eaſe of this obliging gentlewoman: the moment we enter, ſhe makes it a particular rule to enquire after the health of the whole company, and the inſtant we are ſeated, comes regularly round to every individual, and demands a circumſtantial account of the minuteſt occurrence ſince ſhe had laſt the happineſs of ſeeing us; if any one by accident has laboured under a ſlight cold, all the recipes in the Compleat Houſewife are thundered about our ears, and an infinity of lamentations poured out for ſo irreparable a misfortune. Unhappily, indeed, at our laſt meeting, none of us had the leaſt complaint to mention, which I found was a mortification of no trifling kind to my couſin; however, ſhe would not be robbed of an opportunity of ſhewing both her knowledge and politeneſs, and therefore introduced her favourite topic with the greateſt facility, good-naturedly lamenting a ſecond time for a ſore throat, which my ſiſter Rattle had been laid up with the preceding twelvemonth.

But if this preparatory account of Mrs. Notable's politeneſs has given the reader a high opinion of her character, what will he ſay, when I carry him through the ceremony of dinner, and touch upon the unremitting ſolicitude which ſhe manifeſts for the accommodation of the company? Notwithſtanding her table is generally as well ſupplied as any woman's in the kingdom, and notwithſtanding ſhe does not a little pique herſelf upon the elegance of this annual entertainment, yet the moment it is brought up, we have a thouſand excuſes made for the poverty of our dinner. 'Well! Lord! I don't believe you can 'touch a bit on't—but you are ſo good '—though I wonder how you come a 'ſecond time to a place ſo utterly un-'provided!' This we underſtand as a proper cue to praiſe every thing before us, and then are obliged to ſtand a whole volley of encomiums on our extraordinary goodneſs; till at laſt, when we have in a manner half burſt ourſelves, and are told how very little we have eat, a freſh concern for the badneſs of our entertainment concludes the feaſt, and relieves us a little from the fatigue of ſuch extraordinary politeneſs.

How widely different is the conduct of Sir Harry Downright? From an utter averſion to ceremony, he becomes actually the rudeſt fellow alive; and when he borders upon a brutality of behaviour, calls it an eaſineſs ariſing from good-nature and friendly familiarity. In the company of the ladies he ſits conſtantly covered; never helps a ſoul at his own table, though he has an abſolute ſtranger at dinner; nor ever makes any ſcruple to tell a woman ſhe lies, in plain Engliſh. As Sir Harry would not be thought a coxcomb for the univerſe, he carefully avoids the ſmalleſt indication of that character in his appearance: he ſeldom ſhaves above once a week, ſcarcely ever combs his hair, chews an enormous quantity of tobacco, and makes a point of going into well-dreſſed com-

panies with a dirty shirt. Upon the whole, to escape the imputation of ceremonious, he becomes in all places offensive; and for fear of deviating into an effeminate puppy, as he calls it, he throws off all pretensions to decency, and sinks into an absolute brute.

The extremes of behaviour are what every person of sense should cautiously study to avoid; since an excess of ceremony cannot fail of subjecting us to ridicule; and a total disregard of politeness must naturally expose us to contempt: difficult, however, as the proper system of conduct may appear, I shall be bold enough to lay down one rule, which will, in my opinion, entirely comprize it, and serve as a just conclusion to the present paper. In all companies, let a man endeavour to please, rather than expect to be pleased; and if this does not gain him many friends, I shall not scruple to affirm, that it will never procure him a single enemy.

## Nº XXXII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17.

FILIAL piety is a flower of so delicate a nature, that we meet but very few places which can produce it; and though we frequently hear of parents who ruin themselves for the sake of their children, yet we seldom or ever hear of children who do any extraordinary acts of kindness to their parents. Perhaps nature has formed the parental sensibility infinitely more exquisite than the filial, and, for some wise purpose, implanted a much greater fondness on our minds for those we beget and educate, than for those by whom we are begotten and educated ourselves: at least, custom has firmly established such different sentiments relative to the behaviour of parent and child, that it is thought a matter of the highest praise in a wealthy son to settle a paltry fifty pound for life on a distressed and worthy father; but an action of little or no merit in a father to settle twenty times the sum upon an indigent son. I supped last night at my sister Rattle's, where I generally hear something new, and was entertained by my nephew Harry with the following exception to the foregoing position, which I flatter myself will prove no disagreeable relation to my readers.

An eminent merchant, whose name I think necessary to conceal under that of Webley, married a most amiable woman, with whom he received a considerable fortune, and by whom he was blessed in the first year with a daughter, called Maria: Mrs. Webley, however, unhappily catching a cold during the time of her lying-in, did not long survive the birth of her child, but died in about three months after; with her last breath conjuring her husband to be particularly attentive to the welfare of the unfortunate little Maria.

Mr. Webley, for two years before his marriage, had been connected with a subtle designing woman, by whom he also had a daughter; nor did his having a wife put an end to the guilty intercourse: under pretence of important business, he frequently staid in town with her a night or two in the week, while Mrs. Webley was down at the country-house in Hertfordshire; and as frequently carried her into the country with him, whenever he knew his lady could not conveniently leave town. His marriage, in fact, was rather an engagement of interest, than a union of inclination; and Mrs. Webley's fortune enabling him to live up to the summit of his wishes, the moment she was interred, he thought there was no farther necessity for restraint or disguise. In short, six weeks had scarcely elapsed, when he married the abandoned woman we have been speaking of, and pitched upon the most profligate of her sex to supply the place of the very best.

We shall pass over the time of Maria's infancy, when she experienced little more than the diminutive cruelty of a narrow-minded mother-in-law, and come at once to that period which may be justly reckoned the most important of her life. She had just entered on her eighteenth year, and was blooming into all the perfections of her sex, when Mrs. Webley began to think of executing a scheme which she had long in agitation. She saw Maria treated by every body with the greatest respect; and beheld her own daughter, though dressed out in all the fashionable foppery

of

of the times, and infinitely more attended to, received with a degree of insipid civility that bordered upon contempt. The shameful neglect which Maria experienced at home, gave a constant lustre to her merit when abroad; and if she found no kind of countenance in her own family, she met with the highest in every other place. This was a circumstance which galled Mrs. Webley to the very soul; and being, moreover, fearful that the regard so universally shewn to Maria would be a means of obstructing any favourable addresses which might be made to her own daughter, she took a speedy opportunity of quarrelling with that unhappy young lady; and being, as the generality of those of her principles most commonly are, both master and mistress of the house, very fairly turned her out of doors. Maria was not, however, destitute of a protector, though she had lost a father. A young fellow, with a good understanding and a splendid estate, who had long solicited her favourable opinion, and gained it, took that opportunity of pressing for her hand, and was made the happiest of men.

Maria was married about five years; during which time, though she had often entreated for a reconciliation, she never could be admitted to the presence of her father; when, taking up the Gazette one Saturday evening, she met with his name amongst the list of bankrupts, and instantly fainted on the floor: she was, however, soon brought to herself; when, forgetting in a moment how she had been turned out upon the charity of an inhospitable world, and exposed to the most pinching poverty and disgrace; how for a series of years she had been treated as an alien to her father's family, and even denied the most trivial necessaries, while strangers were rioting on her mother's fortune; she flew to her husband, whose happiness was centered in obliging her, and painting out the miserable situation of her father, obtained his consent to settle three hundred a year, out of a sum which he would allow her for pin-money, on him, to alleviate so distressing an incident. With this she immediately took coach, and proceeded to her father's: the door was now thrown open at her approach; and being introduced to the old gentleman's presence, they gazed upon one another for some moments, and then burst into a mutual flood of tears.

Mr. Webley's misfortunes had opened his eyes to the strangeness of his conduct, and nobody could be more ready to condemn it than himself. What, then, must we judge his emotions to be, when a daughter, whom he had left destitute of bread, came to offer him a genteel allowance for life; and the same eyes which he had steeped in tears of the keenest distress, came to fill his with drops of unutterable joy? His gratitude as a man, his feelings as a father, instantly rushed upon his soul; he dried his eyes, looked full in his daughter's face for some moments, then capering about the room with the phrenzy of a bedlamite, burst afresh into tears. Suffice it, however, that after his affairs were settled, he retired into the country upon this yearly allowance, but did not live long enough to enjoy the first quarter: the mortification of being a bankrupt, the consciousness of his family errors, and, finally, the very generosity of his daughter, which was intended to sweeten the remainder of his life, proved a means of hurrying him to his end; the agitation of his mind threw the gout into his stomach, and he died in Maria's arms, in the fiftieth year of his age. His wife and daughter now thought themselves utterly undone; but Maria, with a greatness of mind peculiar to herself, in an instant dispelled their apprehensions, by a continuation of two hundred a year during her life; and, without ever stooping to hint any thing of their former behaviour, told them, that they must consider it as no compliment, since she looked upon it as an indispensable duty, which she ought to pay to the memory of her father.

## Nº XXXIII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a conſtant reader of your productions; and have conceived ſuch an opinion of your regard for the poor women, that I am reſolved to trouble you with an account of my ſituation, eſpecially as it is poſſible that ſeveral of my ſex are labouring under the ſame anxieties, and that this letter may be productive of ſome happy conſequences to them, however it may fail in being any way advantageous to me.

You muſt know, Sir, that about three years ago I was married to a man of diſtinguiſhed underſtanding, as well as conſiderable fortune; and therefore looked upon by all my friends to be very happily ſettled for life. My huſband's known good ſenſe, Sir, and the affluence of his circumſtances, were conſidered by every body as indubitable ſecurities for my felicity, and there was ſcarcely a young lady of my acquaintance who did not envy me ſo favourable a match.

I had not, however, been married above a month, Sir, before I found myſelf treated with a palpable indifference, and cut off from all thoſe rational enjoyments, which I flattered myſelf with poſſeſſing in the continual ſociety of ſo ſenſible a huſband. Inſtead of entertaining me, as he was formerly accuſtomed, with inſtructive relations of men and things, he grew ſilent and reſerved; and, inſtead of the continual vivacity with which his looks had before been animated, nothing now appeared upon his brow but a ſettled air of the moſt perfect diſregard, or a ſupercilious ſmile of contempt. I was for a long time at a loſs to account for ſo ſurpriſing an alteration of temper; and you may be ſure, as I paſſionately loved Mr. Highmore, ſuch a change muſt have given me many an uneaſy moment, particularly as I ſtudied, with all poſſible care, to keep my anxiety concealed. It was a mortifying circumſtance, Mr. Babler, if I aſked a tender queſtion, to be anſwered with a blunt *Yes*, or *No*; to be told I teazed him, if I enquired after his health; and to have my hand toſſed away with an ill-natured 'Pſhaw,' if I preſumed to take hold of his, or attempted to regulate any little article of his dreſs. At laſt, Sir, the myſtery was unravelled; I overheard him one day talking to an intimate friend of his about the follies of the fair-ſex, declaring that the very beſt were a moſt contemptible pack of creatures, much below the notice of a man of underſtanding—'For my part,' ſays he 'I ſuppoſe myſelf as happily married as any body of my acquaintance; 'but ſtill a wife is no more than a woman; and as ſuch, though a neceſſary 'animal, ſhe is conſequently below the 'regard of a man of common ſpeculation.'

Having thus diſcovered the occaſion of Mr. Highmore's indifference, I reſolved to render myſelf as worthy of his attention as I could, by converſing on the moſt important ſubjects I was able: for this purpoſe I would occaſionally cite a paſſage from our celebrated writers, and deliver my opinion on hiſtorical events, poetical compoſition, and ſuch other parts of literature as I thought would be moſt agreeable to the temper I ſaw him in. But, alas! Sir, inſtead of finding his humour abated by this ſolicitude to pleaſe, I had the misfortune to ſee it viſibly encreaſed: if I quoted a paſſage from any author, he ſmiled; if I pretended to judge, he tittered; but if I was inſolent enough to differ from the minuteſt opinion of his, he either flew out of the houſe, or politely laughed in my face. Every caſual impropriety of accent he was ſure to ridicule; and thoſe little grammatical inaccuracies which women cannot always avoid, were everlaſting objects of contempt. Failing in my endeavours here, I attempted to engage him in a variety of amuſements, but in vain. If I propoſed the play, women only diverted his attention from the buſineſs of the performance; if I propoſed a walk in the park, women truly were pretty companions to dangle with in public; if I mentioned a game at cards, fools only had recourſe to diverſions of that kind. In ſhort, Sir, let me ſtart what I would, either

either the meanneſs of my underſtanding, or the greatneſs of his own, was ſure of defeating all my views, and nothing was happy enough to merit his approbation but what immediately proceeded from himſelf. For this laſt twelvemonth, Sir, Mr. Highmore has commenced *bon vivant*, and ſat till three or four o'clock every morning with a ſelect party of friends, who are eminent in the world for their literary abilities; as it is a fundamental principle with theſe extraordinary gentlemen, never to part, while they are able to ſit together. Irregularity and intemperance have ſo impaired the conſtitution of my poor Mr. Highmore, that I am terrified to death at the bare ſuppoſition of the conſequences. His employment all day is to recover from the exceſſes of the preceding evening, and his buſineſs all night to provide an indiſpoſition for the next day.

For God's ſake, Mr. Babler, ſay ſomething about thoſe men of ſenſe who look upon women to be idiots, and yet are guilty of actions that would make the meaneſt of us aſhamed. Is this ſuperiority of underſtanding, Sir, upon which the generality of your ſex ſo highly pique themſelves, to be pleaded as an eternal excuſe for indiſcretions and errors, and no allowance to be made for the little failings of the poor women, though we are treated continually as fools?

I could ſay a great deal, Sir, on this ſubject; but fearing to treſpaſs too much upon your leiſure, I ſhall take my leave, and am, your humble ſervant,

ARABELLA HIGHMORE.

## Nº XXXIV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

SINGULARITY is ſo much the affectation of the preſent æra, that there is ſcarcely an individual but what ſtrikes out a plan of operation for himſelf, and exhibits a particular ſomething in his character that marks him in a diſtinct manner from every body elſe. This endeavour at ſingularity, let the circumſtance be what it will in which we diſplay it, is always the reſult of much pride and little underſtanding; it proceeds from a deſpicable ambition to be talked of; and, like the Epheſian youth, ſo we hear our name bandied about from mouth to mouth, it becomes a matter of indifference how we are mentioned, whether for erecting a temple to the Deity, or for ſetting one in flames.

Among many inſtances which I have remarked of ſubaltern ſingularity in the courſe of my own acquaintance, the foundation of poor Ned Totter's fame is one of the moſt extraordinary. Ned, for theſe laſt twenty years, has not touched a morſel of butcher's meat, his diet conſiſting chiefly of fiſh, fowl, and vegetables; and this bare circumſtance has been a conſtant ſource of ſelf-exultation ever ſince: when he comes into company, he watches for every opportunity of relating this meritorious act of abſtinence, and is particularly pleaſed if any ſtrangers happen to be preſent to bleſs him with a ſtare of aſtoniſhment, which he looks upon as the higheſt indication of applauſe. I have frequently known him run about from coffee-houſe to coffee-houſe, in order to meet with a freſh admirer; and engage a whole table of politicians with a diſcourſe upon the peculiarities of all the crowned heads in Europe, that he might turn the converſation of his auditory at laſt upon the ſtrangeneſs of his own. A very ſenſible young fellow, who has ſtudied his ruling paſſion, takes every occaſion of indulging it, and leads him with a preparatory diſcourſe to a conſtant mention of his favourite ſubject: this has made the young fellow ſo extremely agreeable to my old friend, that upon a fit of illneſs ſome time ago, he ſet him down very handſomely in his will, and appointed him one of his executors. Various are the circumſtances I could tell of this affected ſingularity. Tom Steady has made it a point, every day ſince the laſt rebellion, to take a view of Temple Bar, and indulge himſelf with a ſight of the heads. This extraordinary mark of his affection for the government has anſwered his

his wishes; it has been talked of a thousand times among his acquaintance, and Tom is at once the truest subject, and the happiest man, in the kingdom. Frank Loiter has rendered himself immortal for lounging about Westminster Hall during term time. Will Careless is universally celebrated for having his stockings hanging continually about his heels; and my ingenious friend, Mr. Thomas Clough, of Drury Lane Theatre, is talked of by all the world for never missing an execution at Tyburn.

But if singularity in trivial occurrences is so certain of making us ridiculous, an affectation of particular vices, through a desire of appearing singular, cannot surely fail of rendering us odious, as well as despicable, in the eyes of the world, and occasion every rational person to view us with abhorrence, as well as contempt; yet, notwithstanding the consequences are so evident and positive, what numbers do we not continually observe establishing their character upon a foundation like this? What myriads does not every day's experience point out, who are ambitious to be thought rascals as well as fools, and seek the public admiration in some singularity of behaviour for which they ought to be hanged?

Of this number is that celebrated libertine, Sir Charles Riot. Sir Charles is possessed of a handsome figure, an extensive understanding, and a plentiful estate; yet, with all these advantages to gain an honest reputation, his whole study is to acquire a character from the destruction of every family he is admitted into; and his only ambition to become conspicuous from the number and blackness of his crimes. In one house he has ruined two sisters, the daughters of a most intimate friend: in another he has debauched the wife of a man, to whom he is indebted for no less than his life.

These actions are universally spoken of; but, so far from being ashamed, our hopeful baronet thinks the mention of them a compliment to his personal qualifications; and always makes gallantry the subject of his conversation, that somebody may take notice of the laurels he has won in that extensive field of real infamy, and imaginary applause.

Singularity, Mr. Babler, unfortunately for us, is to be met with in every thing but the virtues, and these being so very rare to be met with themselves, to talk of it further than as it concerns our follies and our vices, would be unnecessary; for which reason I shall drop the subject here, and stile myself, Your's &c.

SAM. SPECULIST.

## N° XXXV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

YOU seem a friendly good-natured sort of a man; and I have often heard my grandson repeat, with a great deal of satisfaction, many pretty things out of your writings; and Tom, though I say it, is a very sensible lad, has been three years at a Latin school, and is, moreover, as dutiful a child as any in England. But, to the purpose.

You must know, Mr. Babler, I am, and have been a long time, offended with the custom of keeping holidays at particular festivals, because it is productive of many evils, and cannot possibly do any good. It is merely an encouragement to the vicious and profligate, instead of exciting any principle of morality or religion; and, perhaps, it would not be going too far, if I asserted, that there are more enormities committed at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, than can be expiated by the virtues of the whole year besides. I am led to this subject from some domestic occurrences, during the course of the two holidays in the Whitsun-week; with which, since I have taken the liberty of troubling you, I shall endeavour to make amends for trespassing on the patience of your readers.

Breakfast was no sooner over on Whitsun-Monday, than my maid Hannah came up stairs, and begged leave to pass the remainder of the day with some relations of her's, who had made a party for Fulham. As the girl was a very good servant, I not only granted the request, but made her a present of half a crown towards defraying the expences of the excursion;

excurſion; ſhe thanked me, promiſed to return early in the evening, and ſet out. About nine o'clock I expected her home, but no Hannah came, Mr. Babler; ten ſtruck, and ſtill there was no ſign of her appearance; eleven ſtruck, but no Hannah, Sir. I can't ſay but I was terrified, leſt ſome accident ſhould have happened to the poor girl; and therefore ſent my Tom, with the other maid Nanny, to her ſiſter's, a diſcreet, ſober ſort of a young woman, who keeps a chandler's ſhop within two or three ſtreets. All that this produced was new uneaſineſs. The ſiſter knew nothing of her; heard of no party ſhe was engaged in, and ſeemed to be frighted out of her wits. On this report, I went to bed, but deſired Nanny to wait up till twelve o'clock; ſhe did, but to no purpoſe: Hannah never came near the houſe ſince, Sir; and we have lately diſcovered that ſhe went out with a footman belonging to an officer that day, inſtead of going with any relations; that ſhe dined with this ſorry fellow at Chelſea; where, after dinner, he perſuaded her to drink a glaſs or two of punch, which had ſuch an effect upon her, being utterly unuſed to ſtrong liquors, as rendered it abſolutely neceſſary for her to be put to bed. No doubt the whole was a deſign of the artful villain's; for ſhe was no ſooner under the blankets, than he ſtepped, without any ceremony, into bed too; and deſtroyed, in one moment, that reputation which the unhappy creature had preſerved unſuſpected, for a whole life. When ſhe had recovered the uſe of her reaſon, ſhame and diſtraction prevented her from coming home; and, thinking the worſt that could had now happened, ſhe retired with her betrayer to a little room in a hedge alehouſe, where ſhe continued with him ever ſince; refuſing either to ſee her ſiſter, or return to her place, though I ſent her word I ſhould take her back again, if ſhe left the villain, and would give an abſolute promiſe never to have any intercourſe with him for the future.

Such, Mr. Babler, is the conſequence of holiday-making—and now ſuffer an old woman to make two or three curſory remarks. I remember my firſt huſband, and as honeſt a man he was as ever broke the world's bread, uſed to ſay, poor man! that the Church, by the inſtitution of holidays, perverted it's own deſign, and laid in reality a ſnare to deſtroy, where it meant to improve, the morals of the people. Indeed, Sir, I am perfectly of opinion with Mr. Robinſon; holidays were originally inſtituted to inſpire a ſolemn ſenſe of religious duties, and to give thoſe a favourable opportunity of proſecuting their devotions at particular ſeaſons, whoſe neceſſary avocations might prevent them from ſo conſtant an attendance as they might poſſibly wiſh at other times; but let me aſk, Sir, if the end of the Church is anſwered in the leaſt? Do our young people go to church on holidays? Alas! Sir, they conſider a holiday as an abſolute exemption from every concern of a religious kind; and a ſort of licence to indulge every depravity of their ſentiments! Do our old people go to church on holidays? Very few, Sir; they are employed in cards and feſtivity; and ſo far is the verge of that eternity, upon which they totter, from making any ſalutary impreſſions on their minds, that though I have not miſſed church a ſingle day theſe thirty years, yet at the three grand feſtivals, I have obſerved it to be worſe attended than at any other ſeaſon of the year: a few ſuperannuated women, like myſelf, have compoſed the whole congregation; and even the clergyman has run over the ſervice in ſuch a prepoſterous hurry, that I have often thought he was impatient to mix in the cuſtomary riots of his pariſhioners.

Seeing, therefore, Mr. Babler, that holidays, ſo far from anſwering, rather defeat the purpoſes of religion; and knowing alſo how deſtructive they are to the community, by encouraging a ſhameful idleneſs among all ranks of people, (the lower order particularly, whoſe families muſt be material ſufferers by the ſmalleſt neglect) I think that every conſideration, both divine and human, ſhould induce us to lay them aſide, ſince nothing can be more ſcandalous, than to ſet a ſeaſon apart for the ſupport both of idleneſs and irreligion; and nothing more repugnant to wiſdom or virtue, than to ſanctify, as one may ſay, a time for prejudicing the fortunes, and corrupting the morals of the people. I am, Mr. Babler, your humble ſervant,

RACHAEL REDMAN.

No.

## N° XXXVI. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15.

AN excefs of fenfibility, though nothing can be more amiable than a feeling heart, is perhaps one of the greateft misfortunes which the human mind can labour under, becaufe there is an everlafting fource of objects to intereft it's tendernefs, and a conftant round of accidents to work upon it's fears. Happily, indeed, we are not overftocked with people who poffefs this quality to any extraordinary degree; but the few who do, might poffibly, for their own fakes, as well as the happinefs of others, be much better, if they were endued with no fenfibility at all.

Poor Tom Frankly is a ftriking proof of this obfervation: at one and twenty he ftepped into an eftate of fifteen hundred pounds a year, and was looked upon by every body as a very promifing young fellow; before the year was out, however, Tom's exceffive fenfibility made him find out all the neceffitous; and whether their poverty was the fault of their ill-fortune, or the confequence of their crimes; whether they were to be pitied or condemned, he was indifferent in his relief: indigence was a never-failing recommendation, and the villain profeffed tafted equally of his bounty with the worthieft of men: his character once known, the parafite and the gambler were continually at his table, and working on his humanity with unceafing repetitions of penury and want. Fraud was perpetually peftering him with letters of fupplication, and the loofeft proftitutes of the town teazed his ears for ever with imaginary amendments and artificial diftrefs; his hand was ftill open to all; and though his friends very frequently remonftrated on the injudicious diftribution of his fortune, his anfwer was eternally, that he could not bear to fee any bofom fwelled with affliction, nor any eye reddening with wretchednefs and defpair. In lefs than ten years, however, his eftate was reduced to a fifteenth part of it's worth; the great decay of his own circumftances now obliged him to be lefs attentive to the affairs of other people; and feeing that nothing but beggary was before him, if he went on much farther, he bound himfelf under a large penalty never to give away above a tenth part of the pitiful little hundred a year which was left: this he conftantly difpofes of in halfpence and pence to the common beggars; and the moment it is expended, locks himfelf up in his room, to avoid both the fight and importunity of thefe vagrant mendicants, till the receipt of his next year's fupply.

Lady Catherine Nettleworth is another inftance of exceffive fenfibility, but it is, however, entirely confined to her children, and her lap-dogs; if one of the young gentlemen goes abroad, fhe is under the moft violent agitation, left fome accident fhould happen in the fhorteft excurfion; if he goes in the coach, fhe is in a continual uneafinefs for fear it fhould overfet; if he rides, her apprehenfion is equally alive, left the horfe fhould unhappily take fright; if he walks, fhe dreads the confequence of the fatigue; and let the day be either wet or dry, fhe trembles alike with a terror of his catching cold, or being parched to death with the fun. In order to quiet herfelf in all thefe different refpects, fhe fometimes keeps the young gentlemen within doors for a whole week; but then fhe is miferable in the other extreme; fhe fickens, left they fhould fuffer for want of exercife; and dies, for fear they fhould be ftifled for want of air: at table, if they eat hearty, fhe dreads their being furfeited; and is wretched, from a fuppofition of being indifpofed, if they do not. In fact, whatever they do, fhe feldom has a moment's peace, for thinking about their welfare; and, wherever fhe goes, rarely fuffers any body elfe to enjoy a moment's fatisfaction, for talking about their various accomplifhments.

Her concern for her lap-dogs is no lefs remarkable than her folicitude about her children: if the maid neglects to comb them twice a day, fhe flies into the vapours; or fuffers them to go into a damp room, fhe falls into fits. In fhort, there is fcarcely a circumftance in which her fenfibility is not creating her a new fource of difquiets; nor a friend in the world whom fhe does not render unhappy with her endlefs apprehenfions and complaints. Upon the whole, I may

may with certainty enough conclude this paper as I ſet out, with affirming, that an exceſs of ſenſibility (amiable ſoever as it is to have a feeling heart) is productive of ſo many uneaſineſſes to ourſelves, and ſo many inquietudes to our friends, that it would in reality be much better for thoſe who labour under it, to be unacquainted with the finer feelings, and to have little or no ſenſibility at all.

## Nº XXXVII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a plain young fellow near the Monument, and have been courting a moſt agreeable girl in the neighbourhood for above ſix months; but what ſurprizes me is, that though ſhe receives the viſits of no other ſuitor as I can diſcover, and is generally upon ſome little party of pleaſure with myſelf, I can by no means bring her to a candid declaration of her ſentiments, nor find out whether or no ſhe deſigns me for a huſband. Every queſtion that has a tendency to explain matters, ſhe avoids with the greateſt addreſs, and flies out into a violent paſſion if I preſs it with any degree of earneſtneſs or importunity.

All this time, Sir, I am ſpending my money, loſing my time, and neglecting my buſineſs. I have been obliged to ſquire her to Vauxhall or Ranelagh two or three times a week; and, becauſe I would do matters genteelly, have kept the coach in waiting at each of thoſe places the whole evening: this, and the other neceſſary expences, bear a little heavy on the pocket of a tradeſman, Mr. Babler, who has no ambition to appear in the London Gazette, though accompanied or uſhered in with the truly reſpectable name of Robert Earl of Northington.

When I firſt commenced an humble ſervant of my adorable's, I thought it abundantly ſufficient to propoſe a walk in the Park, or a diſh of tea at the White Conduit Houſe; and imagined a prudent conſideration for the main chance would recommend me to her good opinion, eſpecially as ſhe had but a very ſmall fortune of her own; and knew, upon that account, the neceſſity there was for a little œconomy. But, lack-a-day, Sir, the White Conduit Houſe was reſorted to by nothing but barbers boys, or mantuamakers apprentices; and for a walk in the Park, ſhe never could be able to crawl ſo far; ſhe hated draggling through the ſtreets, and could not bear to be toſſed about at the diſcretion of every clumſy porter, or odious Iriſh chairman. This was a broad hint; and, therefore, hoping to bring her to an immediate compliance by the appearance of generoſity, I gave into her humour; and coached it about ſo unceaſingly, that ſhe now looks upon it as an indiſpenſable compliment which I am obliged to pay, and never ſtirs without a carriage out of doors. This is not all, Mr. Babler; ſhe has lately got a knack of ſtopping at goldſmiths ſhops, and at milliners of her acquaintance; there ſhe has fallen in love with a variety of little knick-knacks, which, like a blockhead, I have fooliſhly complimented her with; and no later than laſt week, Sir, it coſt me ſixteen guineas for a diamond hoop-ring, and five for ſome little paltry article in her headdreſs.

Theſe expences, and the uncertainty I am in with reſpect to her inclinations, have made me very ſerious, Sir; for though I love her with the utmoſt ſincerity, and would marry her to-morrow without a ſixpence, ſtill I muſt have ſome regard for myſelf too, and prevent in time the deſtruction of my little fortune, and the laughter of the world into the bargain. I have therefore taken the liberty, Sir, of troubling you with a few queſtions, by the advice of my friend Tom Watkinſon, as he conſtantly takes in your entertaining paper, and ſpeaks in the handſomeſt manner of your good-nature and abilities.

Be ſo good then to tell me, if it is not very culpable in any woman, who intends to marry an admirer, to drive him on expences conſiderably beyond what ſhe knows can be afforded by his circumſtances?

ANS. Yes.

Q. Is it not to the laſt degree ſcandalous for a woman, if ſhe does not in-

tend to marry an admirer, to ſaddle him with continual parties of pleaſure, and to receive preſents of value from him at every opportunity?

A. Yes.

Q. Is not the woman who does the firſt, a wife utterly improper for any man that has a fortune to loſe?

A. Yes.

Q. And is not the woman who does the ſecond, a wife too deſpicable for any man at all?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you adviſe me, at the next interview with my goddeſs, in ſpite of every frown of diſdain, or toſs of reſentment, to demand a peremptory anſwer whether ſhe is willing to have me or no?

A. Yes.

Q. If ſhe ſhould happen to conſent, would you adviſe me to marry her?

A. This queſtion is uſeleſs, being ſufficiently anſwered by the firſt and third queries.

Q. Would you marry a woman yourſelf, Mr. Babler, who had acted like my adorable?

A. By no manner of means.

## Nº XXXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29.

THE following complaint is ſo juſt and general, that I ſhall make no apology for laying it before my readers.

### TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am an unhappy poor raſcal, and have, to my unſpeakable mortification, been married theſe three years to a woman of extraordinary piety and virtue. Don't be ſurpriſed—I am neither angry with her piety, nor offended with her virtue; on the contrary, I revere her for both theſe qualifications; but they are attended with conſequences ſo very diſagreeable, that I frequently wiſh, when provoked beyond all bounds, that ſhe had been indebted to Billingſgate or Bow Street for the rudiments of her education.

I am, you muſt know, Sir, a haberdaſher, juſt ſet up at the polite end of the town; where, with a little induſtry, I have a very reaſonable proſpect of making a pretty tolerable fortune. I am very aſſiduous in buſineſs myſelf, and wiſh I could ſay as much for my wife. But, lack-a-day, inſtead of minding the duties of the ſhop, when I am trotting up and down with a parcel of goods, her ladyſhip runs out to her devotions to ſome neighbouring church or chapel, and truſts the care of every thing to an ignorant apprentice, or a giddy-headed journeywoman. What is worſe, upon theſe occaſions, Sir, her ſanctity renders her commonly as croſs as the very devil; and if I ſay a ſingle ſyllable, I am ſure to hear a volley of charitable ejaculations for the welfare of my poor ſoul, and to be treated the remainder of the whole day like a downright reprobate.

You would imagine, however, Sir, that when ſhe does come home, ſhe might be kind enough to favour me with a little of her aſſiſtance, and to caſt an eye over the regulation of my family. Far different is the caſe; the moment ſhe comes in, ſhe retires to her room, and there waſtes away the time till dinner over ſome ſtupid compilation of enthuſiaſtic prayers, or ſome ignorant rhapſody made uſe of at her conventicles; there, profoundly wrapt in dirt and meditation, ſhe imagines herſelf diſcharging the great employment of her life, and never caſts a ſingle thought upon the miſerable poor dog her huſband, or the unhappy little wretches her children.

I have ſpoke of her, Mr. Babler, as being wrapt up in dirt and meditation. I ſaid no more than the truth; for the filthineſs of her perſon is equal to the piety of her ſentiments. Looking down with diſdain upon every ſublunary enjoyment, ſhe thinks it beneath her to pay the leaſt attention to her dreſs; and upon this principle it is, that hardly once in three months ſhe puts on either a clean cap or a light-coloured apron. A ruſty old cardinal ſerves her for a coverſlut as often as ſhe goes out; and as for her appearance at home, ſhe kindly imagines that any thing is good enough to wear before her huſband; nay, Sir, ſometimes ſhe won't waſh her hands or face in a whole fortnight; and you ſhall judge what a condition her arms were in, upon

upon one of these occasions, when a surgeon in the neighbourhood, who came to bleed her, mistook the dirt for antiquated kidskin, and desired she would take off her gloves.

From the preceding little sketch of my amiable helpmate, Mr. Babler, you may judge that her conduct has as great an effect upon my mind, as an impression on my circumstances; and consequently, that I am never easy without being abroad, though I know the absolute necessity for my attendance at home upon business. I am cut off in my own house from every little comfort of society, and of course must have an inclination of seeking it somewhere else. I cannot ask a friend to breakfast, dine, or sup with me. My own stomach is constantly turned when I sit down to table, and that I think abundantly sufficient, without striving to disgust my acquaintance. Besides, from an utter neglect of the most domestic concern, let me say what I will, I can never get a joint of meat properly dressed, but have it brought up without being heated half through, or else entirely done to rags.

Thus situated, as I said before, I take every opportunity of going abroad, and this opens a fresh source of inconvenience and anxiety. My wife, to crown my misfortunes, is uncommonly fond of me; and if I either dine or sup from home, is sure of being constantly in tears. Yet, Sir, this home she makes intolerable; for even after shop-hours, if I oblige her by staying within, I meet fresh instances of mortification. Mirth and good-humour are banished from my doors; a harmless joke is considered as a sinful levity; and an innocent laugh prohibited as wholly antichristian. The case is not mended neither, if, in conformity to her humour, I wear a grave aspect; for then, Sir, she either teazes me to death with unnecessary apprehensions about my health, or reproaches me with being ill-natured, because I am confined to her company. Any way she is sure of finding fault, and any way I am equally certain of being rendered miserable.

Is there no means, Mr. Babler, of curing this unaccountable malady of being righteous overmuch? Is there no means of convincing these narrow-minded women, that a moroseness of temper, or a disregard of rational enjoyments, are in no manner encouraged by the sentiments of religion; but that, on the contrary, a sweetness of disposition, and an endeavour to discharge the necessary duties of wife and mother, are particularly some of it's most beautiful characteristics. I do not think this subject would be unworthy the pen of our most eminent divines. Suffer me, through your paper, to beg some of them will consider it, since it is more likely that a lesson on this matter will come with more weight from the pulpit than any other quarter. Your most humble servant,

AN UNFORTUNATE HUSBAND.

## Nº XXXIX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5.

THE impressions which are made upon the human mind, during it's earliest states, being seldom if ever to be entirely eradicated, there is nothing in which we ought to be more careful than the education of our children, particularly in their infancy, when habits, in the strictest sense of the term, become an absolute part of our nature, and prejudices not only find a refuge in the heart, but twist themselves imperceptibly round it's very strings.

I remember, when I was about four or five years of age, my grandmother took me entirely under her own care; and as the good woman, like the generality of her sex at that period, had a firm belief in witches, spirits, and hobgoblins, she frequently entertained me with a variety of their pretty performances; and, if I happened to be any ways untoward, constantly threatened to send me to Robin Greenway. This Mr. Robin Greenway was formerly a journeyman taylor in the neighbourhood, who had gone distracted for love, as the people said, and in one of his desperate fits cut his throat in the parson's garden. Various were the tricks related of this unhappy enamorato; sometimes he came in a storm, and threw a parcel of bricks down his sweetheart's chimney; at other times he assumed the figure of a grey mare; and at others, that of a spotted

ſpaniel; but his moſt favourite mode of appearance was the form of an overgrown calf. Ridiculous as theſe accounts muſt have been inevitably conſidered on the ſmalleſt reflection, yet my poor grandmother believed them all with the moſt religious certainty, and thought it an indiſpenſable part of her duty to make me believe them too. In this ſhe ſucceeded to the utmoſt of her wiſhes: I was ten years old before I would venture to ſleep alone; fourteen, before I had courage enough to go to bed in the dark; and to this very hour, if I happen to be by myſelf, the clock never ſtrikes twelve at night, but I think of Robin Greenway, or ſome other worſhipful member of the ſame community, to whom the bleſſing of an untimely death has granted a privilege of taking what form, and playing what tricks, he pleaſes till the cock crows next morning.

It would be unneceſſary for me to obſerve, that nine out of every ten who may be turned of fifty, have like myſelf, in their infancy, been trained up in the greateſt dread of ſpirits; and that the utmoſt exertion of their reaſon, upon arriving at years of maturity, has not been ſufficient to eraſe the impreſſions which have then been unhappily made upon their imagination. Fortunately, however, the good ſenſe of the preſent æra has provided the moſt effectual ſpells for our ghoſts and ſpectres, and laid ſo many of them ſo effectually in the Red Sea, that harmleſs little boys may for the future ſleep in the moſt perfect ſecurity, and the honeſt country people traverſe the remoteſt church-yard after midnight without the ſmalleſt apprehenſion.

But, notwithſtanding we have in a great meaſure got the better of our ghoſts, there are yet ſome prejudices, and thoſe of a very dangerous tendency, which we have in a manner ſubſtituted in their room, and which it would be much to our honour in this life, and to our happineſs in the next, if we could get the better of too. Theſe are the ſhameful indulgencies to which we think ourſelves entitled on Sundays. In the days of ſpectres and hobgoblins, we thought ourſelves under an indiſpenſable neceſſity of paying ſome regard to the Sabbath; and every man was obliged to pay a fine who omitted going to church that day, unleſs he could palliate his conduct by ſome very feaſible excuſe; but, now-a-days, Sunday is the time particularly ſet apart for riot and feſtivity; and the day, rendered holy by the expreſs appointment of Omnipotence, is often peculiarly appropriated for the greateſt violation of it's laws. Has a great man a journey to make, or a company to invite, Sunday is an idle day, and he fixes either upon that. Has a woman of faſhion an inclination to ſtrip her beſt friends of the money which ought to pay a tradeſman's bill, ſhe ſends cards for Sunday evening. And has a petty little mechanic a mind to cut a figure, why he hires his horſe, takes out his ſtrumpet, and gets drunk on Sunday evening too.

In the inferior orders of life, there is a notion generally prevalent, that cards are very monſtrous on a Sunday; and there are many well-meaning people who would not, upon any conſideration, ſit down to a party of whiſt. None of my readers will imagine, I dare ſay, that I want from this to extenuate the infamous cuſtom of card-playing on the Sabbath of God. All that I want is, to ſhew the lower claſſes of the people, that leaping in the fields, playing at cricket, riding horſe-matches on the roads, and getting drunk on that day, is every whit as criminal as the propenſity to cards, which they ſo highly cenſure in their ſuperiors; that any of thoſe exerciſes which they think allowable, is rather more indecent, becauſe more publicly practiſed, and may in reality be attended with infinitely worſe effects. Let them, therefore, (if it be in vain to preach to the politer world) firſt of all, reform in theſe points of behaviour on Sundays themſelves, before they pretend to arraign the conduct of the great; and, inſtead of diſcovering the mote in the eye of their neighbour, ſit attentively down to pluck the beam out of their own.

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## Nº XL. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12.

I Have been ſtrongly ſolicited to give the following letter a place, which I have unwillingly complied with, notwithſtanding the apparent utility of it's intention, as I am fearful it will affect rather too many of my readers among the venerable part of the fair-ſex, who have been in the decline of life unhappily too ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions, though they have loſt the power of creating any impreſſions of ſuch a nature themſelves.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

IN what manner to tell you my unfortunate ſtory I know not; ſhame and confuſion forbid me to whiſper it to the very winds; but a juſt concern for the happineſs of others has work'd upon my humanity, and wrings the melancholy ſecret from my heart. You muſt know, Mr. Babler, I am a woman of ſome birth, had once a little beauty, and, what was infinitely more important in the eye of the world, a very affluent fortune. At the age of twenty-one, I married the moſt amiable of men, with whom I lived in an uninterrupted round of felicity for ſix and thirty years. During that period we had four ſons and three daughters, who are all provided for, both ſplendidly and fortunately, in the world, and enjoy the fulleſt ſweets of opulence in the midſt of the moſt perfect content.

About nine months ago, Sir—O that I had not ſurvived to recollect a time that now brings Baſiliſks to my imagination, and murders the moſt diſtant beam of comfort with a glance!—the man with whom I had lived ſo happily, and ſo long, fell ill of a fever, and died in ten days. My diſtraction at his loſs was inexpreſſible; yet, when my future conduct comes to be mentioned, I ſhall be ſuſpected of diſingenuity, if I ſay I was concerned at it at all; but, believe me, I felt every thing a woman, endued with the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility, could poſſibly experience on ſo tender and afflicting an occaſion; and was reduced ſo low by the conflict which my mind had undergone, that when the phyſicians preſcribed the Bath waters, it was univerſally thought I ſhould not hold out to the journey's end.

Providence, however, which deſigned that I ſhould ſtand a warning to my ſex, to the ſurprize of my whole family, worked a miracle almoſt in favour of my health; and in about three months I was ſo perfectly recovered, that I came up to town, and ſeemed not only to have left every trace of my indiſpoſition behind, but the principal marks of my age too; in ſhort, every body complimented me on the life of my looks, and raked the latent embers of vanity, which had a long, long time, lain ſmothered in my heart, with ſo much ſucceſs together, that, upon a ſecret conſultation with my own wiſhes, I could not abſolutely conclude but I might be yet prevailed upon to change my condition, and make a ſecond venture on the ſmooth ocean of that ſtate which rendered my life ſuch a bleſſing in the firſt. The moment a thought of this nature comes into the breaſt of an old woman, it clings like Cleopatra's aſps, and moſt commonly ſtings her to death. For my own part, Sir, though I felt a ſecret repugnance at the notion of another huſband, yet the idea ſtuck cloſe to my imagination; and I even ſometimes endeavoured to perſuade myſelf, that this honeſt averſion, which in ſpite of me my conſcience would retain, was nothing but a prejudice of education or cuſtom, which it was highly meritorious to ſubdue. My memory was ranſacked for inſtances where women in my circumſtances had married a ſecond time, with handſome young fellows too, yet lived extremely happy, notwithſtanding the vulgar and abominable ſuppoſition that nobody could entertain a paſſion for a woman in years: nay, Mr. Babler, I found texts of Scripture in ſupport of my favourite opinion, and abſolutely forced myſelf to believe that I was obliged, by the very principles of religion, to make another choice.

While I was thus debating, Sir, my ſon Edward, who is a colonel in the army, brought a young fellow of his acquaintance to ſup at my houſe. I do not know how it was, but I fancied he was the moſt handſome man I had ever

ever seen in my life; his conversation, too, was so elegant, and he paid so profound a deference to my opinion, that I did not sleep—shame upon my antiquated eyelids—a single wink the whole night. What need I trespass on your patience—Major Ravage repeated his visits, began to find he was far from disagreeable, and, in short, made an offer of his hand in such terms as I was wholly unable to resist. Without ever enquiring into his character, or his circumstances, I consented to be his at an age that would become me to wait upon my grand-children, and flattered myself that his affection might be engaged to my person, at the very moment I knew it to be entirely created by my purse. My poor first husband imagining that, as I had been a faithful wife to him, I should be a tender mother to his children, left me in possession of fifty thousand pounds, and a jointure of three thousand a year; every sixpence of which, as far as I could, I nevertheless unnaturally settled on the villain, who had taken the advantage of my second childhood, the morning after the celebration of our nuptials.

My children, you may be sure, would be justly offended at this preposterous match, and they were; but, to be rid of upbraidings, which cut me to the soul, I quarrelled with them in turn, and forbade them ever to enter into my sight: but, alas! I had too soon an occasion for their assistance and relief. A fortnight had scarcely passed, when Major Ravage, without saying a single syllable, set off for Bath with a tradesman's wife in the city; and about an hour after his departure, an upholsterer came in, demanding the possession of my house and goods, having bought every thing that morning from my husband. I will not attempt to paint my astonishment, my fury, and my distress; it was too much for nature to support, and I fell lifeless on the floor. Not to tire your patience, Sir, upon examining into every thing, and sending to the major, he flatly refused either to send me a shilling, or ever to cohabit again with so stale a parcel of mortality—that was his decent expression. In this situation, my eldest daughter came and conducted me to her house, generously soothing me in the tenderest manner; but wounding me, however, a thousand times more by her goodness, than she could possibly do by seizing the opportunity to load me with complaints. I am now going to sue for a separate maintenance; and shall convince the grey-headed sucklings of my sex, that an old woman who marries a young fellow, if she even should meet with a worthy one, can never expect to be treated with any tenderness or regard; and that, on the other hand, if she consents to wed a villain, she can look for nothing but an endless scene of poverty and contempt: where she is most fortunate in her choice, neglect and ridicule must be her portion; and where she happens to be otherwise, the public scorn of the world will be aggravated by a continual round of private wretchedness and distress.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

LAVINIA RAVAGE.

## Nº XLI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

SEEING a variety of letters in your entertaining paper from husbands and wives, I have taken the liberty of adding to the number of your matrimonial correspondents, and doubt not, if you favour my complaint with a place, but that it will be attended with very salutary effects.

You must know, Sir, I am married to one of the most agreeable women in England, have an unabating passion for my wife, and every reason to imagine her sentiments are equally tender for me: there is nothing of consequence but what we continually study to oblige each other in; yet, at the same time, there are a thousand little trifles in which we are always sure to disagree, and which are not only an endless source of disquiet to ourselves, but of uneasiness to our whole family.

Last night, for instance, Sir, after supper, I acquainted Nancy that a vintner,

ner, who owed me a hundred pounds for some Lisbon, (for, you must know, I am a wine-merchant, Mr. Babler) had failed, and that there was but little probability of expecting two and six-pence from the sale of all his effects. I furthermore informed her, that I was much to blame in the affair, and that I had trusted this man contrary to the advice of an intimate friend, who was perfectly conversant with his circumstances. My wife, instead of reprehending me for indiscretion, as the generality of her sex would have done in the same case, made use of every argument in h-r power to dissipate my chagrin; told me, the most careful were unable now and then to avoid an error, and bid me console myself under my loss, by thanking Providence that I had not been a sufferer in double the sum. I was greatly charmed with this disposition in Mrs. Mountain, Sir, and expressed my sensibility of it in a manner with which she seemed infinitely pleased. Well, after all this, would you imagine, Mr. Babler, that a most trivial circumstance should make us part beds for that night! My favourite liquor is a glass of punch, and it happens to be my wife's too: making a little as we were alone, I unluckily squeezed the pulp of the lemon into the bowl; upon which she immediately exclaimed, with some warmth—'Lord, my dear, you 'have spoiled the punch!'—'No, my 'love,' replied I, 'the pulp gives it a 'fine flavour; and besides, you know 'I am very fond of it.'—'Ay, but,' says she, 'you are sensible I can't abide 'it.'—'Then, my dear,' returned I, 'it is an easy matter to avoid putting 'any in your glass.'—'Lord! Mr. 'Mountain, I have spoke to you a 'thousand times about this very circumstance; I believe, in my conscience, you do it on purpose to give 'me disgust.'

Here, Mr. Babler, we began a contest; severity produced severity, till at last I ordered a bed to be made for myself; and poor Nancy retired to her own, with her eyes swimming in tears.

For the whole night, neither of us (for I judge of her by myself) had a single wink of sleep; we tumbled and tossed, canvassed the matter fifty ways in our minds; and at last concluded, like Lockit and Peachum in the Beggar's Opera, that we were both in the wrong. Yet, notwithstanding all this, when we met at breakfast, but an hour ago, neither of us would condescend to speak first; we affected a resentment of countenance that was utterly foreign to our hearts, and endeavoured to keep up the appearance of an unremitting anger, when we both of us longed to be reconciled, and had the most passionate inclination to be pleased. Breakfast was over before we exchanged a syllable. When the servant had left the room, I prepared to go out, and had just got to the parlour-door, when poor Nancy, unable to hold it out any longer, cried, in a tone of irresistible softness—'And 'will you go without speaking a word?' Here our whole ridiculous quarrel was at an end: I turned to her with all the fondness I could possibly assume, and held her in my arms for some moments; while she, returning the fervor of the embrace, burst into a flood of tears.

It is inconceivable to think, Mr. Babler, how contemptible these little differences have made us in the eyes of our own servants. Whenever they see us cool towards one another, they titter and laugh, and say the poor things will soon kiss and make it up again. It was no longer ago than last week that I overheard my rascal of a coachman tell one of his fellow-servants, that his master and mistress were nothing better than an overgrown boy and girl, and that he fancied a little of his horse-whip would be of great service to both of them. It is very odd, Mr. Babler, that people who really love one another, and are not wholly destitute of understanding, should give way to such resentment in the merest trifles, who, in the most important circumstances of life, are above feeling the smallest resentment, or entertaining the minutest disesteem. Many is the time, Sir, I have found fault with my wife for stirring the fire, when her spending five hundred pounds has not given me the least uneasiness; and many a time has she fallen out with me, if, in cutting up a fowl, I happened to splash ever so small a drop of gravy on the table-cloth, though she has felt no discomposure in life, if I spoiled a rich silk, or dirtied a fine head-dress. This morning, however, we have agreed, as a means of keeping ourselves from passions of this nature

nature for the future, to send you the foregoing account; and if it should turn out any way serviceable to others, as I hope it will, I shall have a double reason to sign myself, your most humble servant,

ROBERT MOUNTAIN.

## Nº XLII., SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26.

THERE is a very sensible saying among the women, when any of their acquaintance happen to be brought to-bed of a boy; and this is, That Mrs. Such-a-one has got one of the right sort. In reality, there are so many dangers attending the education of a young lady to years of maturity, and there are such a variety of circumstances to destroy her reputation, which, through the fashionable depravity of the times, are considered as so many excellencies in the other sex, that I am no way surprized to find people particularly rejoiced at having 'one of the right sort,' as it is emphatically expressed; since the satisfaction of the parent is considerably less exposed, as well as the happiness of the child; to say nothing of the infinitely greater ease with which the infant can be brought up.

When I seriously consider the customary mode of educating the fair-sex, instead of being surprized to find so many turn out an affliction to their friends, or a disgrace to society, I am in fact astonished that we do not find a multitude more. Now-a-days, instead of being attentive to the cultivation of a young lady's mind, our regard is entirely engrossed by the accomplishments of her person; and the generality of our mothers are totally unconcerned whether or no their daughters are acquainted with the most necessary duties of religion, provided they can make a tolerable figure at a party of whist, and turn out their toes.

From the first moment little Miss is sent to school, she is provided with a doll, perhaps as large again as herself; and is instructed in the necessary manner of dressing it properly, and sending it quietly to bed. Thus, in the earliest stage, her mind receives a turn for gallantry and dress, which imperceptibly strengthens with her years; and being accustomed to nothing but compliments on her beauty, she becomes utterly indifferent to every thing else: the little reading she is mistress of is rather a prejudice than a benefit; for as it is principally composed of novels, it constantly warms her imagination with sentiments of intrigue, and adds to the opinion which she entertained of her own person and understanding. Hence she fancies herself the heroine of every extravagant romance; till at last, from an admiration of the character, she really takes it up, and runs off, if in high life, with some Amadis of a subaltern officer; and, if in low, with a strolling player, or a barber's boy.

The scandalous neglect of female education may, however, be put down to the account of the other sex. By a custom, no less arbitrary than unreasonable, we cut them off from a liberal instruction; yet, at the very time that we lay a manacle on their understandings, affect to despise them for fools: as if they were beings totally opposite by nature to ourselves, we fancy that the same enlargement of mind, which is so absolutely necessary for us, is utterly improper for them; and suppose that, the better capable they are of acting in life, the worse they must behave of course. Such are the sentiments entertained by the high and mighty lords of the creation, relative to the education of the ladies. What wonder, therefore, or what pity is it, that we are so frequently unhappy in our daughters and our wives! Are we not in fact answerable for every error resulting from their ignorance, since that ignorance is principally occasioned by ourselves? And should we not, consequently, instead of throwing the whole blame at their doors, remove it entirely to our own?

I shall conclude this paper with a few memorandums, written by an excellent young lady, lately deceased, who was brought up in a very different manner from the generality of her sex. They were communicated to me yesterday by her father, with tears in his eyes, and shall

E. F. Burney del. Heath sculp.

Plate II. Published as the Act directs by Harrison & C.º Oct.r 28. 1786.

ſhall ſtand as a laſting monument of ſo deſerving a daughter's virtue and underſtanding.

*Mem.* Being now eighteen years of age, and haſting to that period of life in which I am to prove my gratitude to the beſt of parents, let me always make it a rule to prefer the gratification of their wiſhes to the enjoyment of my own.

*Mem.* A parent is entitled to the firſt place in every child's eſteem; and ſhe that can be deficient in a point of duty here, ought juſtly to be ſuſpected of infidelity in the diſcharge of every other.

*Mem.* By all means to be ſtrictly attentive in the worſhip of my Creator, as I can never expect a future bleſſing, without ſhewing a becoming gratitude for a paſt.

*Mem.* Always to believe a man has the baſeſt deſigns, who wants me to conceal his addreſſes from my father.

*Mem.* Never to hear the proteſtations of any man who has behaved diſhonourably to another woman.

*Mem.* In all companies to treat thoſe with the greateſt ſhare of deference, who are moſt unhappy in their perſons or their circumſtances.

*Mem.* Whoever calls me goddeſs, angel, or any other ridiculous appellation, though never ſo faſhionable—a fool.

*Mem.* Miſs Polly Beaufort extremely uneaſy at ſeeing Mr. Beverley ſpeaking to me in the drawing-room laſt Sunday evening;—to avoid converſing with that gentleman as much as poſſible for the future.

Poor Mrs. Johnſon, the ſhoemaker's widow, and three children, in the greateſt diſtreſs. *Mem.* To allow them a guinea a week till a happy alteration in their circumſtances, and to ſave this article out of unneceſſary expences in houſe-keeping and cloaths.

Sir John Blandford, a man of much merit, who I fear has ſome ſentiments in my favour, I muſt avoid with the niceſt circumſpection: for as I cannot return his eſteem, it would be infamous to miſlead him with chimerical notions; and inhuman to treat him with deriſion or diſreſpect.

*Mem.* To ſend the hackney-coachman's wife as much as my papa got the fellow fined in, for behaving inſolently laſt Tueſday, when we were ſuddenly caught in a ſhower, and coming from the Park.

*Mem.* Mr. Winworth, a moſt deſerving and accompliſhed gentleman; to think no more of him, (if I can help it) unleſs he ſhould be mentioned by my papa.

## Nº XLIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3.

NEXT to an invariable rectitude of conduct, there is no light in which the character of a man can poſſibly appear ſo amiable as in a hearty concern for his errors, eſpecially thoſe which are more the conſequence of human infirmity than the effect of a mean premeditation. In proportion to the repentance or atonement, we are apt to raiſe him in our eſteem; and it is not the leaſt part of his merit, that libertines themſelves are loſt in an admiration of his behaviour, however ſlow, through a ridiculous fear of public contempt, they may be to imitate an action which they cannot, in ſpite of faſhion or education, forbear to love.

My nephew, Harry Rattle, called upon me this morning; and after the uſual 'How do you do' of the day, pulled out a letter from the identical Mr. Bumper, whom in a former paper I mentioned as having ſent Harry a challenge for refuſing to drink a ſtrumpet he had toaſted one night after ſupper at his own houſe. Mr. Bumper is a young man of nine and twenty, who has received a liberal education; is in poſſeſſion of twelve hundred pounds a year; and though he has launched pretty freely into the cuſtomary exceſſes of the times, has been diſſolute rather from faſhion than inclination. For a few weeks paſt he has been at a tenant's in Berkſhire, from whence, two days ago, he ſent the following letter to Harry, with permiſſion to communicate it, through my means, to the notice of the public.

TO HARRY RATTLE, ESQ.

DEAR HARRY,

IN my laſt letter I told you how deeply I was ſtruck with the perſon of Sally Poplar, my tenant's daughter, and expreſſed an intention of ſetting out immediately for London, for fear I ſhould ſucceed in any deſign prejudicial to her innocence and virtue. Yet, notwithſtanding I was perfectly convinced how neceſſary a ſtep of that nature would be, I could not work myſelf up to a ſufficient reſolution of quitting the place. I flattered myſelf I ſhould be able to reſiſt every temptation, yet indulge myſelf a few days longer under the ſame roof with the bewitching ruſtic; and though I knew it would be impoſſible to poſſeſs this happineſs without ſaying ſome tender things to her, I nevertheleſs thought I ſhould avoid carrying matters to any critical length, by a criminal importunity. From my example, however, the unthinking part of our acquaintance may be inſtructed, that it is infinitely wiſer to fly from a temptation than to combat with an opportunity. The moment a man is alone with a woman he admires, and from whom he has received ſome indications of reciprocal eſteem, human nature muſt not be human nature if he does not endeavour to improve ſo fair an occaſion of gratifying his wiſhes: he may fancy he will go to ſuch and ſuch lengths, and no further; but paſſion will hurry him, imperceptibly, from liberty to liberty, and he will find it utterly impoſſible to retain the leaſt conſideration for the unhappy girl, when he has totally loſt all conſideration for himſelf.

Such was my caſe the night before laſt; Sally and I lay on the ſame floor, and ſhe had promiſed to let me chat half an hour with her before ſhe went to bed. This half hour was productive of another and another; till at laſt, the poor girl was worked up to ſuch a pitch of tenderneſs, that ſhe could refuſe nothing; and then it was I found, in ſpite of all my humanity, that there was no poſſibility of getting off. It would have been very ſtrange, after preſſing three hours for the laſt favour, which all the time I was in hopes would have been refuſed, if I had withdrawn the moment it was granted: the conſequence therefore was, that after I had been raſcal enough to deprive her of her reaſon, I was villain enough to ſeize the opportunity which that ſuſpenſion gave me—

> And for a moment's guilt, deſtroyed
> A life of ſpotleſs fame.

We had ſcarcely fallen aſleep, (do not laugh, Rattle, we ſlept, upon my ſoul) but old Mrs. Poplar having, as ſhe imagined, forgot to ſee that the kitchen-fire was out, (a piece of care which ſhe never omitted) came down ſtairs, and paſſing by Sally's door, which in the confuſion of affairs we had neglected to lock, turned the bolt and came in. I need not attempt to paint her aſtoniſhment, nor, upon being waked, our own ſurprize. Sally ſhrieked, and hid herſelf beneath the clothes; Mrs. Poplar wrung her hands in a fit of unutterable diſtraction, and deſired her huſband to come inſtantly down. The good man, terrified out of his wits for fear his deſk had been broke open, or his houſe ſet on flames, made what haſte he could; but never was diſtreſs or conſternation ſo great, as when he found out the real ſituation of affairs, and beheld the deſtruction of his only child: for a moment he was petrified; till at laſt, recovering the uſe of his recollection, he caſt a look at me that cut me to the very ſoul, and crying 'O Sir!' burſt into a violent flood of tears. In my life I never was ſo much affected; I felt myſelf truly deſpicable, and was at once torn with ſhame and remorſe. To a man not utterly deſtitute of humanity and reflection, Harry, no circumſtances could be ſo mortifying: inſtead of gratitude for the cordial welcome which I had received in the houſe of my friend, I had violated the hoſpitality of his roof, and robbed the darling of his age of what ought to be infinitely dearer than her life. The girl I doated on to death ſeemed abſorbed in diſtraction; and her worthy parents were almoſt loſt in deſpair. What could I do, Harry? The torture of the damned was an Elyſium to what I ſuffered; and, without reparation, of what ſervice was it to repent? Thus ſituated, I begged Mr. Poplar and his wife to withdraw till I was dreſſed, and then I would endeavour to ſatisfy them: they did ſo, and went down to the parlour. I followed them in a few minutes; and ſummoning all the fortitude I could, delivered

vered myself to the following purport—'I will not, my good Mr. and Mrs. Poplar, go about to excuse the transactions of to-night, but own myself a very dirty scoundrel; however, as there is no possibility of recalling what is past, I shall readily make all the atonement in my power, and if I have your consent, will marry Sally to-morrow morning.' The transport of the worthy old couple was now as violent as their sorrow had been but a moment before. Mr. Poplar looked at me for some time with a fixed attention, then broke into an excessive laugh, which possibly might have proved fatal, had he not thrown himself into his great chair, and found a seasonable relief in a flood of tears.

Well, Harry, what say you to my behaviour? I have been married a week, and am convinced that virtue is it's own reward; for, in my days, I never tasted felicity till now: every eye beams on me with gratitude and esteem; and when I enter into an examination of my own heart, all is approbation and joy. I am satisfied of your concurrence, my dear Harry; and as for fools and rascals, their opinion is what a man of speculation must both despise and detest. It is not for the satisfaction of others we are to live, but our own; therefore those actions which secure that satisfaction, since it must always be founded on a rectitude of principle, are the best tests both of the goodness of our hearts, and the soundness of our understandings. Yours, most affectionately,

RICHARD BUMPER.

## Nº XLIV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10.

IT was an admirable reply which Socrates once made to an impertinent coxcomb, who demanded what he would do if there was no other world after this. I need not inform the intelligent reader that this celebrated philosopher was as eminent for the rectitude of his life, as the greatness of his understanding; and that, upon all occasions, he maintained the certainty of a future state, where every man was to be rewarded according to his deserts.—'What shall I do,' returned Socrates, 'if there is not another world after this? Why, at any rate, I shall be as well off as you are—But what will you do if there is?'

It is really surprising, that the force of this excellent answer is not always present to the minds of those people who either take upon them absolutely to deny the existence of another world, or act in such a manner as if they looked upon a belief of it to be utterly ridiculous and absurd. Common policy, one would imagne, should incline them to a uniform rectitude of life, if they were not actuated by real goodness; and inspire, if totally insensible of gratitude to the great Author of their being, something like a reasonable concern for themselves.

When we consider, though ever so slightly, on the nature of man, and reflect on the important something which is continually deciding upon every action in the human bosom, we can scarcely think it possible that there is one man in the whole circuit of creation who is dead to the belief of a future state, or is really of opinion that there is no such being as a God. His own heart must be an evidence against him; and he must feel the certainty of another existence, though he may be apt to cry out with Cato—'When, or where?'

But, however, if there is even a possibility to suppose such a class of creatures as Atheists in being, yet every day's experience will point out millions to our view whose situation is infinitely more terrible, and who are more entitled to the abhorrence of the world, as well as more exposed to the vengeance of their God. A disordered mind, or a weak understanding, may be advanced as some little mitigation of the wretch's infidelity who denies the existence of his Creator; but what excuse can he have who acknowledges the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Deity, yet lives as if he believed there was no Deity at all? What plea can be urged for those who, while they confess themselves indebted for every blessing to the unbounded beneficence of the Supreme Being, act in one constant round of disobedience to his will; and

and trample, while they own the necessity of an implicit obedience to his ordinances, in the most infamous manner, upon the greatest of his laws?

The Atheist, if we suppose any rational creature can be an Atheist, lives consistent with himself; he looks upon this world as the final stage of his existence, and consequently has no occasion to act like those who are in a positive expectation of future punishments and rewards. Hence he is justified in making the most of the present world, and has a kind of title to follow every pursuit that has a tendency to promote his interest, or gratify his inclinations, without any regard to the means.

But surely the man who kneels down reverently at the throne of the Divine Being, pours out his soul in thankfulness for past blessings, or in solicitations for future benefits, is to the last degree inexcusable as well as inconsistent, when he runs from the immediate temple and presence of his God to some licentious scene of immorality, the participation of some criminal enjoyment, or the prosecution of some infamous pursuit. Yet, alas! what numbers have we, who, after endeavouring to obtain a reconciliation with the Father of Mercies, fly, while the awful benediction of the church is quite fresh and warm upon their heads, and plunge into all the vices which but the very moment before they were supplicating the goodness of Omnipotence to obliterate and forgive?

It is to me astonishing, what men, who believe the certainty of a Divine Being, can think of themselves, or what idea they can entertain of their God. One moment, they are all devotion and penitence; the next, we find them steeped in the most glaring contradictions and crimes: one moment they are imploring the King of heaven and earth with a rapture of gratitude and reverence; yet the very next, as if all their supplications were so many absolute designs of turning him into ridicule or contempt, they circulate an audacious laugh at his institutions, and make a daring mockery of his laws. Nay, more, they frequently go into his very temple as if they wanted to aggravate the unparalleled impiety of their conduct; and there, in the very place immediately dedicated to his service, they prosecute the most shameless violation of his commands: there they very frequently go, under the sacred mask of religion and virtue, to seduce unsuspecting innocence to shame; to lodge scorpions in the breast of some unhappy father, and drench a mother's pillow in misery and tears.

Let me calmly ask the believers of a future state, if absolute Atheism is a crime more unpardonable than this? Of what service is our expectation of another life, if we only employ our knowledge to have that life marked out to everlasting torments and despair? Of what advantage is our religion, if we act in such a manner as to make that religion at once our condemnation and disgrace? Or of what utility is our acknowledgment of a God, if the acknowledgment of such a being must harrow up the soul, and goad it with unutterable stings? Atheism is almost a refuge in such a case; and it is much more consistent to cry out with the most abandoned profligate our imagination can form, that there is no existence after this, than exclaim, in the language of the divine Socrates, 'What 'shall we do if there is?'

## Nº XLV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17.

THERE is a certain mode of behaviour in the world which is entirely founded upon Self, and proceeds from nothing but a passionate desire of gratifying our own inclinations; yet which, upon all occasions, lays claim to the title of unbounded benevolence and generosity, and puts in for the universal admiration in numberless instances, where it ought to meet with nothing but the universal contempt. A letter, however, which I lately received from a lady who signs herself 'A miserable Woman of 'Quality,' will elucidate this matter, perhaps, better than the most elaborate discussion which I could possibly enter into; and therefore I shall make no apology for laying it before my readers.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AS you ſeem good-naturedly ready to pay a greater regard to the circumſtances than the compliments of your correſpondents, I ſhall begin with as little ceremony as I intend taking leave, and neither treſpaſs on your leiſure with a fulſome encomium, nor an unneceſſary excuſe.

You muſt know, Sir, I am the daugher of a private gentleman in Oxfordſhire, who had a large family to provide for upon a very moderate eſtate. There were ſix of us, and but three hundred a year to anſwer all contingencies. Happily, indeed, I was the only girl amongſt them; ſo that with a little intereſt, as my father was generally beloved, four of my brothers were fortunate enough to be preferred in the navy, the army, and public offices: the eldeſt and myſelf were the only remaining children at home; and my poor papa, whoſe favourites we particularly ſeemed to be, reſolved to compenſate, by an unwearied attention to our education, for the apparent narrowneſs of our fortunes. As for me, before I was fifteen, beſides all the cuſtomary needleworks peculiar to my ſex, I ſpoke French and Italian pretty tolerably, danced an eaſy minuet enough; ſung an agreeable little ſong, and played a leſſon at ſight on my harpſichord. What was, however, infinitely more eſſential, though now ſeldom conſidered as any part of a young woman's education, I could never ſleep without ſaying my prayers; and at church was no way aſhamed at repeating the Ten Commandments, or raiſing a pſalm with the reſt of the congregation. My perſon was not in the leaſt tortured into any faſhionable form by ſtrait lacing; and as for my face, it was rather more wholeſome than lovely; and not ſo much diſtinguiſhed by any ſurpriſing delicacy of complexion, as by a certain air of complacency and chearfulneſs, which I flatter myſelf beſpoke neither a corrupt heart, nor a total want of underſtanding.

Excuſe me, Mr. Babler, for being thus tediouſly, and perhaps vainly circumſtantial, about either my acquired or perſonal qualifications; but as they were the only cauſes of my great, I muſt not ſay my good fortune, I thought there might be ſome neceſſity for more than a curſory deſcription of both.

Between the age of fifteen and twenty, ſuch as my little attractions were, they procured me no inconſiderable ſhare of admirers, and I had more than one opportunity of marrying very advantageouſly: no perſon, however, engaging my inclination, my father never offered to preſs me on the ſubject, but always tenderly declared his poor girl ſhould chuſe for herſelf in a caſe where ſhe was the moſt principally intereſted. When I was juſt turned of twenty, an occaſion for ſuch a choice occurred; and he readily conſented to the ſolicitations of a young gentleman, who had been left an eſtate of eight hundred a year, in our neighbourhood, by the will of a relation at that time about ſix months deceaſed.

But, alas! Sir, ſee the uncertainty of all human expectations: three or four days before the intended ſolemnization of our nuptials, a certain noble earl, of an immenſe fortune, had his carriage accidentally broke down within a few yards of my father's. Mr. Bilſon my lover, and I, were looking out of the window at that inſtant, and immediately ran out to offer the civilities of the houſe to his lordſhip, who frankly accepted the invitation, and ſtaid there the whole night. My father made every thing as agreeable as could be to his illuſtrious gueſt; and was not a little ſurprized the next morning, when the nobleman told him I had made an impreſſion on his heart, and offered a ſettlement ſo very large, that my poor papa, dazzled with that, and the deſire of ſeeing his favourite Nancy a counteſs, immediately forgot all his former reſolutions to allow me a liberty of chuſing for myſelf, and declared his lordſhip ſhould be put in poſſeſſion of my hand whenever he thought proper to mention a day for that purpoſe. Why need I treſpaſs on your patience, Mr. Babler, to paint either my own diſtraction, or the frantic behaviour of Mr. Bilſon? Suffice it, Sir, that in a week after I was dragged half dead to the altar, and torn from the only man I ever could love, to be wedded to one whom I never can.

The ſubject of my complaint, Sir, now comes to be mentioned. I have been married three years, and endeavoured to make the moſt of my wretched circumſtances by compenſating with the ſtricteſt diſcharge of my duty for an apparent want of love. This is not ſufficient for his lordſhip: mortified that he can engage no return of his affection, he

he is perpetually reproaching me with a want of gratitude; and always telling me of his prodigious condescension in raising me to the rank of a countess, from the former obscurity of my situation. Thus, Sir, he thinks I am obliged to him for making me miserable; and imagines I ought to study nothing but the continual repose of his bosom, because he has generously planted everlasting daggers in mine. There are many women, Mr. Babler, alike unhappily circumstanced; it would therefore be kind if you desired our disinterested husbands to remember for whose sake they have thus graciously honoured us with their names; and to consider, it was not out of any regard for the promotion of our wishes, but through a mean, and very often an illiberal, desire of gratifying their own. Your paper is left at our house once a week; and if you will insert this, my lord will perhaps be convinced he is more entitled to my aversion than my esteem, and be fully satisfied he has made me

A MISERABLE WOMAN OF QUALITY.

## Nº XLVI. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24.

THERE are few professions so critically situated, I believe, as that of an author. The generality of the world are always disposed to turn his productions into ridicule, and the principal number of the remaining part but too much inclined to treat his person with contempt: the first are offended that any body should presume to be wiser than themselves; and the latter look upon it as something very clever to treat a man of superior abilities with disrespect: the contracted circle in which it is his fortune to be esteemed, is most commonly made up of those who either are not adequate judges of his merit, or in no condition to reward it, if they are. Thus (as few gentlemen of the quill are ever possessed of any extraordinary fortunes) they are in a manner set apart to combat with indigence and obscurity; and their genius being naturally depressed by the melancholy state of their circumstances, they become in a little time incapable of reflecting any honour on their country, or of acquiring any comfortable dependence for themselves. The reader, by perusing the following letter, will easily see why I have been induced to take up the pen upon this head.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AT a little snug retirement in Derbyshire I am always favoured with your paper once a week; and as I think it no less instructive than entertaining, I heartily wish, for the benefit of the world, that all our authors were as easy in their minds, as, from the apparent facility of his productions, I conclude the agreeable writer of the Babler. If I may deliver my sentiments, I am really of opinion, that the decline of literature arises more from a want of encouragement than a want of genius in the kingdom; and though I shall not presume to rank myself among men of real abilities, yet I believe the principal part of those who can, have more than once experienced some of the mortifications which I am about to relate, and found them not a little prejudicial to that force of imagination so indispensably requisite for a writer of any character.

You must know, Mr. Babler, I was sent very early to the university, in order to get myself qualified for a living, which a certain nobleman had in his gift, and which he repeatedly assured my father should be at my service on the death of the incumbent, if it was thought worth while on that account to educate me for the church. Unfortunately, however, before I was at Oxford three years, his lordship, who had sat up all night, was taken off by an unexpected accident; for mounting a strange hunter the next morning, at a gentleman's seat where he was then upon a visit, he pursued the game with too incautious a resolution, and broke his neck in taking a five-barred gate. With him perished my expectations; and I was taken from the college directly.

During my stay at the university, I made several little essays in the various walks of literature, merely for my amusement; which were so favourably received by those exalted geniuses the compilers of magazines, that they generally honoured them with the appellation of elegant, and requested the continuation

tion of my correſpondence. This gave me a ſtrong propenſity to writing; and as I looked upon an author to be the greateſt of all ſublunary characters, I was ambitious of gaining ſo honourable a title; and, through this unaccountable infatuation, neglected every neceſſary means of promoting my future intereſt and fortune. It is true, my father bound me to an eminent attorney; but alas, Sir, Homer and Virgil were conſulted infinitely more than either Littleton or Coke; and inſtead of Replies, Rejoinders, or Demurrers, I was in the midſt of term engaged in writing ſome poetical whimſies of my own, or in commenting on thoſe of other people. The little all that came to me on my father's deceaſe was ſoon expended, and I found myſelf in an inſtant left to buſtle through an inhoſpitable world, without either money, buſineſs, or bread. In this dilemma, neceſſity obliged me to have recourſe to the bookſellers: I was accordingly inliſted into the army of literary mercenaries; and, like the humbleſt claſs of ſoldiers, obliged, for the moſt pitiful pittance, to run a frequent riſque of my reputation, and ſometimes a dangerous hazard of my life. Fame, indeed, came in tolerably faſt; but ſtill I ran deeper and deeper into debt: I was totally unacquainted with the cuſtoms of the trade, and the bookſellers having me in their power, conſcientiouſly treated me as they pleaſed. I was confined to my regular hours of work as if I was a ſhoemaker or a taylor, and very often ordered to do a particular quantity in a particular time. Sometimes, Sir, I have been obliged to write a philoſophical eſſay on Contentment, when my heart was burſting with anguiſh; and at others, ordered to produce a poem on Liberty, while the bailiffs were waiting at the door. But the ſevereſt mortification of all, was the impertinent freedom with which I was treated by every ragamuffin of the preſs: the printer would criticiſe on my performances to my face, and the very devils themſelves would talk to me of miſtakes, and propoſe what they were modeſtly pleaſed to conſider as amendments; nay, ſometimes they have invited me to club for a pot of porter, or aſked me to take a game at all-fours at the Gooſe and Gridiron. For fourteen years, Mr. Babler, did I continue this comfortable life; when laſt winter but one, having written a political treatiſe which occaſioned ſome noiſe, a nobleman of great eminence kindly enquired for the author, found me out, generouſly paid my debts, and aſſigned me an apartment in his own houſe. I now thought myſelf made for ever; but I had ſcarcely been a month in the houſe, when my lord's admiration of my abilities began to abate a little: he expected, as an author, that I ſhould ſupport every abſurdity he advanced in an argument; and, as a man of genius, that I ſhould always be comical. With this view, he introduced me into all companies; but when he ſaw I would neither be his paraſite nor his buffoon, his friendſhip very viſibly declined: at table I was inſulted with the propoſal of a wager whenever I preſumed to diſſent in opinion; and then it was inſtantly recollected, with a loud laugh, that authors were but ſeldom overburthened with money. In the largeſt circle of his acquaintance, my lord, by an affected compliment of condolence, would paint out my former diſtreſs, and then inſinuate the merit of his own generoſity in relieving it: at other times, he uſed me with an intolerable inſolence of ſuperiority, and then affected to be diſpleaſed when he put me out of countenance; in ſhort, I almoſt determined to go back to my old profeſſion again, as thinking it better to ſuffer a ſecret affront than to be thus publicly contemptible. I was ſoon ſettled in my reſolution, for the dining-room jeſts on my profeſſion and circumſtances began to be bandied about in the kitchen; and the butler, under a pretended air of ſimplicity and ignorance, came one day up to my apartment, and begged me to raiſe the devil, that he might enquire after one or two of his ſilver ſpoons. Providence, however, took pity on me at laſt: a worthy gentleman, whoſe memory I ſhall ever revere, that had ſeen me two or three times at my lord's table, thought of me ſo kindly as to ſet me down a hundred a year for life in his will, and as he was very old and infirm, ſcarcely ſurvived his generous donation ten days. I heard of it but the very morning I took my leave of his lordſhip; and though I dropped a tear to the memory of my benefactor, I could not help rejoicing at ſo fortunate an alteration in my circumſtances. I have now lived a twelvemonth in Derbyſhire, quite happy in myſelf, and reſpected by every body; and have ſent you this letter to

point

point out the real cause of that decline in literature, which has of late years been so universally complained of in this kingdom. My story requires no animadversion, as every man of sense must exclaim with the poet—

Alas, what chance have authors to be read?
Whose daily writings earn their daily bread!

I am, Mr. Babler, yours, &c.

CRITO.

## Nº XLVII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

IT was a very wise saying of an old philosopher, that happiness was infinitely sweeter in the expectation than in the possession, since the generality of mankind are rather apt to over-value what they have not, and to set too small an estimation upon what they actually have. I remember, Sir, about thirty years ago, when my circumstances were a little contracted, I fancied no man could be miserable who was master of a great estate: it is inconceivable how I used to lie in bed of a morning, building castles in the air, and chalking out future plans of generosity and magnificence, if my stars should ever kindly indulge me with this *ne plus ultra* of human felicity! I have been a member of parliament; have drawn up an impeachment against Sir Robert; harangued the House like a cherubim; received gold boxes from every corporation in the kingdom; refused a peerage; and married a woman of exquisite beauty and immense fortune, in the space of half an hour—when, O dreadful catastrophe! all these golden fantasies have been in an instant swept from my imaginations, by the milk-woman's yell at the door, the falling of the tongs, or the accidental jump of our old black cat.

Yet, Sir, though my finances were moderate enough at the time I am speaking of, still I found more satisfaction in indulging those imaginary objects of felicity than ever I experienced since I came, by the death of a very distant relation, to the possession of two thousand pounds a year. I flatter myself, I am no more of the miser than the generality of my neighbours; and, if I know my own heart, it is as likely to feel for the distresses of the unfortunate, and as willing to relieve them, as some whom I know to pique themselves mightily on the humanity of their tempers. But this is not the point,—my fortune has, I may almost say, unhinged the system upon which I formerly built my happiness, and the actual possession cuts off every pleasure which originally resulted from a chimerical expectation.

This you will probably look upon as a very extraordinary circumstance; but it is nevertheless literally true: instead of being able to reap any great pleasure from an estate, I find it productive of nothing but uneasiness and anxiety; my wants are very limited, and soon gratified; and the very superflux of fortune, which to any other man might possibly be a matter of the highest satisfaction, is to me a constant source of vexation and regret. In the first place, I have no child to enjoy my possessions after I am gone, and I am nothing more than amassing for people who envy me when living, and will in all likelihood despise me when dead. The very man to whom I leave my estate, will, perhaps, be the first to damn the old curmudgeon for not tipping off half a dozen of years sooner; and those for whom I am continually doing a great deal, the readiest to execrate my memory, because I have not done a great deal more.

But though a sensibility of this nature might in some measure render me regardless to the care of my affairs, I look upon it as an indispensable part of my duty to prevent, as much as possible, the least disadvantage from my negligence and inattention; and am less fearful of the *probable* contempt I *may* meet from my relations, than the *certain* ridicule I *must* suffer from my tenants and dependants, was I to wink at a continual plunder of my property, and to permit them indiscriminately to grow opulent at my expence. Thus, any way, Sir, whether I exert a commendable prudence, or throw it entirely aside, this unfortunate estate 'clings like a detested sin 'to my remembrance,' and poisons every comfort which I once was weak enough to imagine it would have produced.

If

If it rains for any time, I am fearful my corn will be washed away; if the weather is uncommonly fine, I am apprehensive of it's being parched up; if it freezes with severity, alas! for my poor flower-garden; if the wind happens to be high, my apple-trees are destroyed; and if it snows, I am in an absolute ague about my little lambs, and eternally scolding John and Thomas for not taking sufficient care to preserve them from the inclemency of the weather. Thus again, in whatever manner the wisdom of the Deity thinks proper to direct the seasons, I am sure to shew an impious dissatisfaction at his decrees; and, to use the emphatical words of Mr. Pope, with a little alteration—

Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Rejudge his laws, and am the God of God.

From my situation, Mr. Babler, let those in the lower classes of life, who murmur at the dispensations of Providence, and think it uncommonly hard to toil for a precarious subsistence, while their neighbours are rolling it away in coaches and six, learn to consider that it is not the dignity of rank, or the affluence of fortune, which is the source of real felicity, but a man's own mind; let them learn to consider, that this very rank, and this very opulence for which they continually languish, are very often the causes of the most severe affliction; and that the swelling dome of courtly magnificence undergoes many a storm, which the humility of the villager's situation keeps from breaking on his little shed. I am your's, &c.

INFELIX.

## N° XLVIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 7.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE good-natured readiness with which I see you insert a variety of letters upon domestic occurrences, has induced me to trouble you with a complaint against my husband, in hopes that his error may be avoided by others at least, though it should fail of the intended reformation in himself.

You must know, Sir, my good man is a shop-keeper near Cripplegate, and as honest a pains-taking young fellow as any of his business; but his notions are rather too elevated for his circumstances; so that neither the strictest industry, nor the most rigid integrity, are likely to carry him prosperously through life, unless I can prevail upon him to change the present frame of his inclination. As the principal part of his acquaintance are tradesmen of eminence, and have their snug little country houses to retire to of a Sunday, my husband determined to make as genteel a figure as the best of them, and accordingly took a handsome box enough last summer near Stratford. It was in vain that I represented the inconveniences which it would inevitably produce, or mentioned a word about the prodigious expence. I was told that Mr. Refine, the goldsmith, our next door neighbour, was as little able to afford such a circumstance as ourselves: it was observed, that Sir Richard Steele somewhere said, the surest method of making a good fortune was to carry the appearance of an easy one; and that surely it was very hard, if we could not have a place where we might enjoy a little peace and quietness one day in the week. To crown the whole, my husband, like many other people when they have a favourite point to carry, was resolved to find reasons enough to support not only the propriety but the absolute necessity of his behaviour, and brought one which was unanswerable: he complained his health was considerably impaired by a constant residence in town, and insisted that nothing but a change of air was able to recover it. This silenced me at once; and a house of twenty-six pounds a year, with a neat pretty garden behind it, was taken immediately, contiguous to the road-side, for the greater facility of taking the stage-coach, and seeing the various rounds of company that passed by.

As our house has a very reputable appearance without, my husband was resolved that a correspondence should be kept up within; and therefore furnished it very genteelly, laying out no less than three hundred pounds for this purpose. So large a sum expended, as I may say,

upon an unneceſſary account, was not a little inconvenient to a young couple, ſcarcely four years in trade, and whoſe capital at firſt was rather moderate. In fact, Sir, we ſoon felt it, and were under the diſagreeable exigence of borrowing the ſame ſum, at an intereſt of five per cent. to keep up our buſineſs with a proper degree of conſequence and punctuality. Well, Sir, every thing being in order at our new habitation, we entered upon it, to enjoy a mouthful of freſh air and a little repoſe from the fatigues of the week. But ſee the uncertainty of all human expectations! The fairer the weather, the more we were deprived of the air; for being ſituated ſo immediately on the road, we were choaked with a cloud of duſt if the window was kept open but a ſingle moment, and had no other proſpect but what was furniſhed by a lifeleſs ſtare through an humble pane of glaſs: if we retired backwards, we loſt the variety which company afforded, and ſtood a chance of being ſerenaded with the muſic of half an hundred hogs, which our next door neighbour had conſtantly breeding in his yard.

This circumſtance was very diſagreeable; but ſtill a material conſolation remained, that of enjoying our Sundays wholly uninterrupted: but here alſo, Mr. Babler, we were quickly undeceived. The moment we entered, our acquaintance formed parties to dine at our houſe; and any three or four who were at a loſs to kill a Sunday, agreed, without any heſitation, to go and eat a bit of mutton with their friend Will Sheffield, the hardware-man. By this means, Sir, inſtead of retiring to tranquillity and repoſe, we opened a new ſcene of buſtle and confuſion, and kept a houſe for no other purpoſe but to bring on an everlaſting round of drudgery, and a very heavy expence. Thoſe who know any thing of houſekeeping, Mr. Babler, are ſenſible how ſmall a way a guinea goes in providing a decent entertainment for half a dozen people. I therefore leave you to judge how agreeably I muſt be ſituated, when forced to wear a conſtant appearance of the utmoſt ſatisfaction to the very people whom, in my heart, I could have wiſhed in a horſe-pond, or ſcolded out of the houſe.

Diſappointed in all his expectation, Mr. Babler, and the charm of novelty being alſo worn away, my huſband is heartily ſick of his villa, yet is both aſhamed and afraid to throw it off his hands; he is fearful his friends will circulate the laugh againſt him, and is apprehenſive his enemies will make uſe of it to prejudice him in his trade. I have told him over and over, it is better for him to be thought a blockhead than to prove himſelf one, and much more to his intereſt to bear a caſual reflection on his circumſtances, than to be a beggar at once: I have pointed out a variety of tradeſmen, whoſe ruin originally proceeded from the vanity of keeping a country-houſe, but all to no purpoſe; for though he acknowledges the juſtice of my obſervation, he remains incorrigible; and therefore I have thought it better to print his name in your paper than ſuffer it to appear in the London Gazette.

We have now three children, Sir, and this curſed country-houſe, which we have not ſet a foot in but twice during the whole winter, runs away with as much as would maintain my whole family. Let me only preſent you with a curſory eſtimate:

| | £. | s. | d. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rent — — — | 26 | 0 | 0 |
| Taxes, ſay — — | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| An additional ſervant, who is to take care of it, wages, board, and lodging — | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| Intereſt for 300l. to furniſh it | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| Accidents and repairs — | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Coach-hire backward and forward — — | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | £ 84 | 0 | 0 |

This, Sir, not to ſay a word of the additional charge of houſe-keeping, (for there muſt be meat, drink, and fire, for our apprentice, ſhopman, and maid in town) viſitors, and unavoidable neglect of buſineſs, is a conſiderable ſum; and in a courſe of twenty years, with a little management, and the bleſſing of Providence, would prove a pretty proviſion for my poor children. Pray, Sir, print my letter, that London Tradeſmen may firſt get fortunes before they entertain a notion of ſpending them; and not, for the vanity of occupying a country-houſe twenty or thirty days in a whole year, throw away what would purchaſe a handſome independence for their whole lives.

I am, Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

SARAH SHEFFIELD.

## Nº XLIX. SATURDAY, JANUARY 14.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I DON'T know a more prevailing error at preſent among all ranks of people, than an endeavour to diſguiſe their real ſituation in life, by an appearance totally inconſiſtent with their character and circumſtances. This reflection I am naturally led into by a viſit which I paid the other morning to my old friend Sir Timothy Trotter, who has been many years in a declining way with the gout; but who, nevertheleſs, like another Lord Chalkſtone, is all life and ſpirits in the lucid intervals, as I may ſay of his diſtemper.

When I was ſhewed up ſtairs, it did not a little ſurprize me to ſee two fellows, dreſſed like grooms, ſitting very familiarly by Sir Timothy's elbow-chair, with jockey-whips in their hands, talking in a careleſs indolent manner of hot maſhes, long ſtirrups, curry-combs, and curbs: as my old friend had always been remarkable for keeping the beſt company, I was the more amazed at ſo odd a couple of viſitors. I remember to have dined with him at the ſquare, when there have been half a dozen ſtars in the room, beſides the two archbiſhops, and three of the foreign ambaſſadors. However, as it was no buſineſs of mine, I ſat down, and, in a little time, to my inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment, heard that theſe two deſpicable looking things were no leſs than two noblemen of very great fortune, the Earl of Snaffleworth, and my Lord Donefirſt.

Struck as I was at that time, I could not help reflecting, how unworthy a nobleman of Great Britain, a man born to be a legiſlator in the moſt generous country of the univerſe, and honoured with ſo great a degree of political ſanctity, that his bare affirmation was conſidered as important as an oath, ſhould be dreſt in a dirty pair of boots, greaſy leather breeches, a ſtriped flannel waiſtcoat, a thread-bare drab-coat, and a little round hat like a waterman's. No wonder, thought I, that the French ſhould look upon us as a nation of paltry-minded people, when we ſtudy to appear contemptible; and our very nobility, who ought to glory in keeping up the conſequence of their characters, are aſhamed to look like what they are, and ſneak from the dignity of titles into the high and mighty quality of grooms.

While I was thus reflecting, the ſervant came up, and told Sir Thomas, that Dr. Styptic, and Mr. Skirts the taylor, were below ſtairs; upon which he was ordered, without much compliment, I thought, to the doctor, to ſend them both up: he did ſo; and a well-looking man, of about fifty, firſt entered, dreſſed in a very handſome ſuit of full-trimmed black, a large deep-bottomed wig, and every neceſſary article requiſite for the ſeriouſneſs of the faculty.—Ay, thinks I, this gentleman is perfectly in character; and is, I dare ſay, a ſenſible perſon, by ſo cloſe an adherence to propriety. I had ſcarcely made the reflection, however, when Sir Thomas cried out—'So, Skirts, have 'you brought the breeches home?' to which having received an anſwer in the affirmative, he returned—'Well, that's 'an honeſt fellow—go about your bu'ſineſs.'

Being ſo much diſappointed in the taylor, I wiſhed for the doctor's appearance, and wondered what the deuce could detain him ſo long: at laſt the door opened, and a gentleman entered, in a ſuit of ſpotted ſilk, his hair nicely dreſt and bagged, and nothing about him but what beſpoke the very meridian of Pariſian elegance. Thinks I, if this ſhould be the doctor! My conjecture was not ill-founded; this was the identical ſon of Galen, whom, if I had not ſeen actually writing a recipe, I ſhould have poſitively taken for a Frenchman of faſhion, or a figure-dancer at the theatre.

When I was juſt going away, Sir Thomas's nephew, who has been lately called to the bar, came in from Weſtminſter, in his gown and tye-wig. 'Well,' ſays I to myſelf, 'thank Hea'ven! here is one man who is not 'aſhamed of appearing in character.' But the young gentleman was not ſeated above three minutes before he pulled off his wig, in the preſence of the whole company, and ſhewed as ſmart a head of hair, in the Tyburn taſte, as could be found within the bills of mortality. I

ſtared, and ſaw the uncle was not a little diverted with my aſtoniſhment; he thought the transformation a very capital circumſtance, and ſeemed proud of a nephew who could alternately put on the gravity of the council, and the pertneſs of the footman. I was, however, diſguſted extremely, and took my leave, heartily convinced that nothing but a very great weakneſs of the mind could occaſion ſo many improprieties in the embelliſhment of the perſon.

Yours, &c.

SENEX.

## Nº L. SATURDAY, JANUARY 21.

IT was a cuſtomary anſwer with the celebrated Dean Swift, when any body aſked his opinion of a great man— 'Stay till I ſee him in diſtreſs.' For my own part, though I think the reply, according to the general ſenſe of the world, extremely ſignificant, yet I can by no means imagine, that diſtreſs is the true touchſtone of fortitude: ſo far on the contrary, it has been my poſitive belief, for a long time, that he who can beſt ſtand the ſhock, as I may ſay, of proſperity, gives the beſt proof of an even mind, and ſhews the firmeſt ſtability of ſoul, notwithſtanding what has been ſaid by our moſt celebrated philoſophers on the other ſide of the queſtion. Adverſity has been juſtly called the ſchool of wiſdom by a variety of writers, becauſe there is nothing which is ſo expeditious in bringing a man to a knowledge of himſelf. When reduced to a narrowneſs of circumſtances, or confined to the anxieties of a ſick bed, the mind naturally turns her eye on thoſe objects which are moſt likely to afford her conſolation and relief. Religion, in a moment, tells her the uncertainty of all human expectations, and bids her depend alone on thoſe bliſsful aſſurances of happineſs in another world, which experience has convinced her are ſo extremely precarious in this: hence ſhe learns a proper mode of thinking, ſhews an implicit ſubmiſſion to the correcting hand of Providence, and becomes perfectly acquainted with what is due to others, from a juſt ſenſibility of what is neceſſary for herſelf.

Proſperity, on the other hand, may be conſidered the ſchool of ſelf-ſufficience, and the almoſt perpetual parent of pride. Whenever the ſun of proſperity ſheds a ray upon mankind, they are apt to grow important in their own opinions, and to think rather contemptibly of thoſe very people who were formerly on the liſt of their intimate friends; the goodneſs of the Deity they imagine to be the conſequence of particular merit, and look upon that as the reſult of their own immediate ſagacity, which is nothing but the unbounded benignity of their God. For theſe reaſons, therefore, I cannot help imagining but what true fortitude, or equanimity, is beſt ſeen in proſperity. We admire the tranquillity of a Socrates going to die, but are raviſhed with the unſwelling moderation of a Cæſar, when maſter of an empire, and ſtill retaining all the complacency of a private citizen.

I am naturally led into theſe reflections by a viſit which I paid the other morning to my old friend Ned Blaze, to congratulate him on an eſtate of three thouſand pounds a year, which lately fell into his poſſeſſion by the will of an uncle, who good-naturedly left him every thing at his death, but who, while living, would not part with a ſixpenny piece to ſave him from deſtruction. Ned, for many years paſt, has ſtruggled with all the difficulties of a high ſpirit, a large family, and a very narrow fortune: ſometimes he has been obliged to ſtay at home for months, and at others has been months in a jail; yet ſtill he kept up his reſolution with all the fortitude of a Stoic, and behaved with a degree of decency and manlineſs which procured him the univerſal eſteem, and not ſeldom the univerſal aſſiſtance of his acquaintance.

As I had always a regard for Ned, and, if I may be excuſed the egotiſm, had proved this regard upon more occaſions than one; I was ſincerely rejoiced at his good fortune, and the moment I heard of it, ſet out to tell him ſo. When I came to his houſe, inſtead of being inſtantly ſhewn up ſtairs by the maid, as had been the cuſtom formerly, a fellow with a bag to his hair, long ruffles, and a laced livery, deſired me, in broken Engliſh, to reſt myſelf in the parlour, and he would carry my name immediately to his maſter: well, I went into the parlour, ſat down, and amuſed myſelf

ſelf above an hour with the elegant Eſſays of my worthy and ingenious friend Dr. Goldſmith, which were accidentally lying in the window. My entertainment was too agreeable for me to think the time long, and I perhaps ſhould not have thought about it at all, if the clock had not alarmed me with the ſtroke of two. Surprized at this unexpected delay, I touched the bell, and aſked the ſervant if he had told his maſter of my being below; he replied in the affirmative, and added, that he would wait on me immediately.

In about a quarter of an hour I heard the dining room door opened, and was informed of Mr. Blaze's approach by a ſlow, heavy, conſequential ſtamp on the ſtairs: the ſervant threw open the parlour door for him as he deſcended, and my friend entered with all the gravity and importance of a very great man. As I fancied he might think it neceſſary to aſſume this ſeriouſneſs of appearance, on ſuch an occaſion as the recent death of a near relation, I ran to him with my uſual freedom, gave him a hearty ſhake by the hand, and ſaid—'Dear Ned, I 'am ſincerely rejoiced at this happy al'teration in your circumſtances.' But I had no longer honeſt Ned Blaze to deal with; my familiarity, I ſaw, was infinitely diſguſting. Mr. Blaze ſtole his hand out of mine as ſoon as he could; and, making me a low bow, replied—'Mr. Babler, I thank you.' We then ſat down; but our converſation loſt all that ſpirit and good-humour which we formerly thought it poſſeſſed before Mr. Blaze's unlucky acquiſition of fortune: we were as ceremonious, in an inſtant, as if we had never ſeen each other before; and every obſervation upon the fineneſs of the weather was introduced and concluded with a *Sir*—of perfect good-breeding and gentility. Mr. Blaze, however, being reſolved to ſhew all his conſequence, rang, and enquired after the footmen by name, that I might judge the number of his domeſtics: he then ordered one with a card to my Lord, and another with a compliment to his Grace; aſked if the goldſmith had ſent home the new ſervice of plate, or if the *vis-a-vis* was yet finiſhed at the coachmaker's. This converſation with the ſervant was kept up with as much indolence and tediouſneſs as if no ſuch perſon as myſelf had been in the room; I therefore thought it but juſt to ſhew a proper degree of reſentment, by immediately taking my leave: I did ſo, after receiving a cool invitation to dinner, and being told there was nothing provided but ten or a dozen things, and no company but the Earl of Sharpſet and the Counteſs of Ombre. When I went home, I thought this little narrative would make a tolerable paper, as it ſerved to rivet me in my belief, that the moſt difficult ſhock which any man can poſſibly ſtand is that of proſperity.

## Nº LI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THOUGH every body muſt allow the character of a coquette to be truly deſpicable, even among the women; yet, when we find it in the other ſex, there is ſomething in it ſo unmanly, that we feel a deteſtation equal to our contempt; and look upon the object to be as much an enemy, as he is a diſgrace, to ſociety. To prove my aſſertion, however, Mr. Babler, give me leave to relate a circumſtance which lately happened in my own family; and which, if properly attended to, may be of real uſe to many of your fair readers.

I am a merchant in the city, and have been above five years married to a moſt deſerving woman; who, as ſhe ſtudies every thing to promote my happineſs, obliges me to ſhew a grateful ſenſibility for the eſtabliſhment of her's; and even warms me with a continual wiſh of anticipating the moſt diſtant of her inclinations. About ſix months ago I took her youngeſt ſiſter home, as I knew it would give her a ſatiſfaction; intending to ſupply the loſs of a father lately deceaſed, and to omit no opportunity of advancing her fortune.

My attention could not have been placed on a more deſerving object: Harriot, Sir, poſſeſſes every beauty of perſon, and every virtue of mind, that can render her either beloved or reſpected; and is, in a word, as accompliſhed a young woman as any in the kingdom: her

her circumſtances, beſides, are no way inconſiderable; ſhe has ten thouſand pounds in the funds; and if ſhe marries to my liking, ſhall not want for a thouſand or two more—but that does not ſignify.

Among the number of people who viſited at our houſe, Mr. Babler, the ſon of a very eminent citizen frequently obliged us with his company; a circumſtance that pleaſed me not a little, as he was far from a diſagreeable man: his perſon was remarkably genteel, and his face poſſeſſed of a more than ordinary degree of ſenſibility; he converſed with much eaſe, was perfectly acquainted with men and things; and, what rendered him a ſtill greater favourite, he ſung with an infinity of taſte, and played with a conſiderable ſhare of judgment on a variety of inſtruments.

This gentleman had not long commenced an intimacy in my family before he ſhewed a very viſible attachment for Harriot, hung upon every thing ſhe ſaid, and approved of every thing ſhe did; but, at the ſame time, ſeemed rather more ambitious to deſerve her eſteem than to ſolicit it. This I naturally attributed to his modeſty; and it rather more confirmed me in the opinion which I entertained of his affection: had he treated her with the cuſtomary round of common-place gallantry, I ſhould never have believed him ſerious; but when I ſaw him aſſume a continual appearance of the moſt ſettled veneration and eſteem; when I ſaw him unremittingly ſtudious to catch the ſmalleſt opportunity of obliging; I was ſatisfied there was no affectation in the caſe, and convinced that every look was the ſpontaneous effuſion of his heart.

The amiable Harriot, unacquainted with art, ſuſpected none; and being of a temper the moſt generous herſelf, naturally entertained a favourable opinion of every body elſe. Mr. Selby in particular poſſeſſed the higheſt place in her regard: the winning ſoftneſs of his manners; the uncommon delicacy of his ſentiments; and his profound reſpect for her, to ſay nothing of his perſonal attractions; all united to make an impreſſion on her boſom, and to inſpire her with the tendereſt emotions of a reciprocal love. She made her ſiſter her confidant upon this occaſion about a week ago; and Maria, very properly, told the matter immediately to me. Finding Harriot's repoſe was ſeriouſly concerned, I determined to give Mr. Selby a fair opportunity of declaring himſelf the next evening, that there might be no poſſibility of a miſtake in the caſe, and that my poor girl might be certain ſhe had a heart in exchange for her own. With this view I engaged him on a *tete a tete* party to Vauxhall; and while he was lamenting that my wife and ſiſter were not with us to participate in the amuſement, I ſaid, gaily—'Egad, 'Tom, I have a ſtrange notion that 'Harriot has done your buſineſs; you 'are eternally talking of her when ſhe's 'abſent, and as eternally languiſhing 'at her when ſhe's by. How is all this? 'Come, own, have I been right in my 'gueſs? and treat me with the confidence of a friend.'

This queſtion quite diſconcerted him; he bluſhed, ſtammered, and, with a good deal of preſſing, at laſt drawled out, that Miſs Harriot, to be ſure, was a moſt deſerving young lady; and that, was he inclined to alter his condition, there was not a woman in the world he would be ſo proud of having for a wife. But though he was extremely ſenſible of her merit, he had never conſidered her in any light but that of a friend; and was to the laſt degree concerned, if any little aſſiduities, the natural reſult of his eſteem, had once been miſinterpreted, and placed to a different account.

The whole affair was now out; the man's character was immediately before me; and, though I could have ſacrificed him on the ſpot for the meanneſs and barbarity of his conduct, yet I bridled my reſentment, and would not indulge him with a triumph over Harriot, by letting him ſee I conſidered his late declaration as a matter of any conſequence; I therefore aſſumed a gaiety which was quite a ſtranger to my heart, and replied—'I am exceſſively glad, Tom, 'to hear you talk in this manner: faith, 'I was afraid all had been over with 'you; and my friendſhip for you was 'the only reaſon of my enquiry, as I 'ſhrewdly ſuſpect the young baggage 'has already made a diſpoſal of her inclinations.'

After paſſing a joyleſs evening, we returned to town quite ſick of one another's company; and pretty confidently determined to have no intercourſe for the future. When I had ſet Mr. Selby down, I went to Maria, and told her how

how things had turned out, and deſired her to break them, with all the delicacy ſhe was miſtreſs of, to her unfortunate ſiſter: ſhe did ſo; but the ſhock is likely to prove fatal. Harriot has ever ſince kept her bed; and for the three laſt days has been quite delirious: ſhe raves continually on the villain who has murdered her peace of mind; and my ever-engaging Maria ſits rivetted to the bed-ſide as continually drenched in tears. In ſpite of all my endeavours to keep the matter private, the tattling of nurſes and ſervants has made it but too public, and denied us even the happineſs of being ſecretly miſerable. The moment I heard it talked of, I called upon Mr. Selby and demanded ſatiſfaction; but could I expect a man to be brave, who was capable of acting ſuch a part as his to a woman of honour and virtue? No, Sir; he called his ſervants about me in his own houſe, and after my departure went and ſwore the peace before a magiſtrate. This is the only method which I have now left to puniſh him, and the only one alſo of exhorting parents and guardians to require an inſtant explanation from any man who ſeems remarkably aſſiduous about a young lady, and yet declines to make a poſitive declaration of his ſentiments. I am, Mr. Babler, with much reſpect, your humble ſervant,

CHARLES TORRINGTON.

## Nº LII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 29.

COQUETRY, or a paſſion for exerciſing the moſt unlimited authority of affectation or caprice on a lover, is a foible which renders the ladies ſo extremely ridiculous in the opinion of the world, that it is aſtoniſhing how ſuch a number of the fair-ſex can poſſibly give into it, and for the mere ſake of making another uneaſy, become abſolutely contemptible themſelves. Abſtracted, however, from the ridicule to which ſuch a character is always expoſed, there is a degree of meanneſs and cruelty in the compoſition of a coquette, which throws the greateſt reflection imaginable upon the benevolence of a lady's temper; and does not more depreciate the goodneſs of her heart, than leſſen the opinion we might entertain of her underſtanding. To delight in rendering a worthy man wretched, for the ſake of ſhewing a little power, is ſurely what the giddieſt creature in the univerſe muſt condemn upon a moment's reflection; and when ſhe moreover conſiders that his wretchedneſs muſt always be proportioned to his tenderneſs for her, gratitude, as well as humanity, muſt ſhew her behaviour in a very culpable light, and tell her that every pang which ſhe lodges in his boſom is an abſolute diſhonour to her own.

The generality of the ladies have a want of candour to anſwer for, which is too often a ſource of the ſevereſt anxiety to others, as well as a ſpring of the greateſt embarraſſment to themſelves. Raviſhed with the enchanting breath of admiration, they lend a greedy ear to the ardent language of proteſting love; though, at the ſame time, it is a thouſand to one but they look upon the lover with the moſt inſuperable contempt: hence, though they never intend to bleſs him with a reciprocal return, they never can prevail upon themſelves to give him a final diſcharge; and the poor man is, in all probability, kept dangling for two or three years, till either avarice or inclination, a large eſtate, or a red coat, makes a conqueſt of the heart, and (to uſe the emphatic words of the celebrated Doctor Young)

> —Amply gives, though treated long amiſs,
> The man of merit his revenge in this.

For the honour of the ladies, however, I ſhall introduce a little narrative to the public obſervation, which, I hope, will ſerve as an example to my fair readers, and at the ſame time convince thoſe infidels, who are averſe to believing any thing laudable of the ſex, that they are to the full as capable of the moſt exalted actions as ourſelves, however we may erect the creſt upon the ſuperior dignity of manhood, or ſwell upon the acquired advantages of education and knowledge of the world.

About ten years ago a gentleman of conſiderable family in Ireland, whom I ſhall diſtinguiſh by the name of Butler, being over on an excurſion to this metropolis, he accidentally dined at a friend's

friend's houſe in Pall Mall, where he fell paſſionately in love with a young lady, whom I muſt be equally free in concealing under the name of Lambton.

Mr. Butler communicated his ſentiments to his friend, who happened to be a relation of Miſs Lambton's, and requeſted his good offices with the lady. The friend, who knew Mr. Butler to be a moſt deſerving young fellow, and was ſenſible that, in point of birth and fortune, he had conſiderable advantages over his fair relation, was overjoyed at the propoſal, and communicating it to her father next morning, poor Miſs Lambton received poſitive orders to prepare for Mr. Butler's viſit that very afternoon.

Mr. Butler came dreſſed, and a finer figure, perhaps, was not to be found within the Bills of Mortality; he wanted but half an inch of ſix foot, and was made in a manner remarkably manly, without running into any thing unweildily clumſy, or aukwardly robuſt: his face was diſtinguiſhed with a ſet of ſtrong marking lines; each feature, to uſe the poet's expreſſion, 'was expanded with ſoul,' and breathed the inexpreſſible ſomewhat which diſcovers the man of faſhion at the firſt glance; add to this, that there was ſomething uncommonly intereſting in his very tone of voice, which no leſs engaged the general attention, than commanded the univerſal reſpect: he came in a ſuit of pompadour velvet, richly embroidered with ſilver, and ſeemed as well calculated, in fact, to ſucceed with a fine lady, as the moſt celebrated of his coutrymen.

Being left deſignedly alone with Miſs Lambton after tea time, he began in a very ſenſible and polite manner to make a declaration of his ſentiments; but had ſcarcely uttered a ſentence, when the young lady interrupted him, and begged his attention for a few words; he made a low bow, and ſhe addreſſed him to the following purport: 'I am but too apprehenſive, Sir, on what account I am honoured with this viſit; my father, this morning, made me acquainted with your partiality in my favour; and, to be candid, from the little I have ſeen of you, I do not know a man in the world, was my heart diſengaged, who ſhould ſooner command a place in my eſteem: but, Sir, it is impoſſible for me ever to return your ſentiments as you could wiſh; my affections have for a conſiderable time been engroſſed by a gentleman whom I have been many years acquainted with; and I ſhould think it an unpardonable injury to his tenderneſs, as well as to your worth, was I to keep this circumſtance a moment from your knowledge, after you have indicated the ſmalleſt degree of a particular reſpect.'

It is eaſy to gueſs Mr. Butler's aſtoniſhment during this ſpeech; he bluſhed exceſſively, played with his ruffles, and gave no other interruption than a *Madam* or two, pronounced with the ſtrongeſt emphaſis of ſurprize. Miſs Lambton, ſeizing the opportunity which his ſilence afforded, thought it beſt to diſemboſom herſelf entirely, and thus went on—

'From the opinion which I entertain of your generoſity, Mr. Butler, I flatter myſelf you will not uſe my father's authority, to tear me from the only man I ever can be happy with; nor make any attempts to gain a hand, which, on account of my prior attachment, can never be worthy of yours. Let me conjure you, therefore, dear Sir, to decline your addreſſes; and if you can have the additional goodneſs to give ſuch a meaſure any motive but this declaration, through my whole life I ſhall be bound to wiſh you that felicity with ſome more deſerving woman, which it is utterly impoſſible you ſhould ever enjoy with me.'

I will not treſpaſs upon the reader's patience with an account of what further paſſed upon this occaſion: ſuffice it, however, that Mr. Butler not only diſcontinued his addreſſes from that minute, but intereſted himſelf ſo effectually in favour of Miſs Lambton, and her lover, Mr. Seymour, that old Mr. Lambton gave his conſent to their marriage, and Mr. Butler himſelf ſtood godfather to a fine boy about ten months after.

In the courſe of a few years, Mr. Seymour, by ſome lucky hits, accumulated a prodigious fortune, and died, leaving the ſum of thirty thouſand pounds at the ſole diſpoſal of his lady; the reſt he divided among his children. Mrs. Seymour, whoſe affection for her huſband was uncommonly tender, did not long ſurvive ſo great a loſs; ſhe fell into a languiſhing diſorder that carried her

her off in about eighteen months, universally regretted by all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance. A little before her deceafe, however, fhe made a ftrict enquiry after Mr. Butler, of whom fhe had not heard a fyllable for the fpace of feven years: fhe at laft found out that he had retired to the fouth of France, upon an annuity of a hundred pounds; his fine eftate having been entirely deftroyed, chiefly through the perfidy of his younger brother, for whom he had been bound in immenfe fums, and feveral ineffectual fchemes to retrieve the fhattered fituation of his affairs.

The generous heart of Mrs. Seymour overflowed with pity at his diftrefs; his exalted conduct in relation to her and Mr. Seymour, rufhed at once upon her recollection; and in her will, which fhe ordered to be made without delay, fhe inferted this particular claufe with her own hand—'I give and bequeath to the Hon. Charles Butler, 'the fum of ten thoufand pounds, on 'account of his great generofity in withdrawing his addreffes when I was un'married, and ufing his good offices 'towards my union with my dear Mr. 'Seymour.'

This legacy was paid immediately after Mrs. Seymour's deceafe; and the ftory was laft night told me by a gentleman of undoubted veracity, who received it himfelf from Mr. Butler.

## Nº LIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AS you have kindly taken the poor women under your protection, give me leave to complain, through your much-admired paper, of two young fellows, relations of my own indeed, who conftantly vifit at our houfe. The firft, Sir, is a Templar, lately called to the bar, who thinks the effence of every thing, either amiable or polite, is entirely confined to his profeffion; and is continually teazing us with pleas, replications, rejoinders, and demurrers: the other is poffeffed of an independent fortune, and is what the unthinking part of the world calls a man of the town, a perfon of great humour, and a keen fenfible fellow.

As there are three or four girls of us generally together, and both Mr. Brief and Mr. Brazen are men of profeffed gallantry, they are always fure of joining us at the tea-table, to make the beft difplay of their refpective abilities: yet inftead of converfing upon thofe topics which we can chearfully join in, they talk continually on thofe fubjects which are either totally impoffible, or utterly improper, for us to underftand. My coufin Brief retails all the caufes that are determined in Weftminfter Hall, with the moft infufferable minutenefs and infipidity; and, after he has taken up our attention for two hours together, looks round with an air of fuch prodigious importance, that I have been often more provoked at this confequential demand of our approbation, for fatiguing us with his impertinence, than even with the impertinence itfelf, though nothing can be fo difgufting, contemptible, and abfurd.

But what, if poffible, aggravates the error in this worthy coufin of mine, is a cuftom which he has of putting cafes to us, and afking us the meaning of Subpæna, Latitat, Capias, Certiorari, and a thoufand other technical terms in the law, which he confiders as matters of the greateft importance; and then, Sir, when he has entirely nonpluffed us, you would laugh to fee how he plumes himfelf upon the triumph he has acquired; and with how fignificant a wink he looks round on his friend Mr. Brazen, as much as to bid him obferve what a defpicable figure he has made of the foolifh giddy-headed girls of the company.

Mr. Brazen does not indeed take Mr. Brief's method of deftroying our patience, or infulting our underftandings with what we cannot comprehend; for, on the contrary, Sir, he piques himfelf upon being a remarkably plain fpeaker, and will not hefitate to pronounce the moft apparent indelicacies in the moft offenfive words: he looks upon it as franknefs to be grofs, and thinks it a certain fign of wit to be unpardonably rude and unmannerly. He told my fifter Sally, no later than yefterday, that fhe was an ignorant little pufs; and

when I took him up for the familiarity, laughed directly in my face, and said I had a prodigious deal of impudence. Then, Sir, he swears so horridly, he terrifies us to death; and scarcely mentions any thing without one of these shocking execrations. From an opinion that indelicacy is a sign of great sense, and a belief that it is very spirited to be blasphemous, he is continually shewing his parts at the expence of common decency; and always making a parade of his courage, by flying in the face of his God! Many is the time, Sir, he has sent me sinking with shame out of the room; and made me shudder with the earnest pronunciation of some new-invented oath, which he has picked up in the licentious circle of his miserable acquaintance.

I am the more concerned, Mr. Babler, for this culpable conduct in my two cousins, because they are both very honest, well-meaning young fellows; and are far from being destitute either of real benevolence or true generosity. I wish, therefore, Sir, you would tell them that nothing can be a greater insult to a woman's understanding, than to converse with her about matters with which it is impossible she should be acquainted; and that nothing can be a grosser affront to the rectitude of her heart, than the illiberal practice of those indecencies and execrations, which are generally confined to the most profligate of her sex.

I am far, very far, Mr. Babler, from preaching up an unnecessary preciseness or severity of behaviour; on the contrary, I think freedom, while it is confined within the limits of good-breeding, one of the most amiable essentials to the pleasure of every rational company: but, Sir, where this freedom infringes so far upon the bounds of politeness, that a woman is either treated as an idiot, or something infinitely worse, that moment I think the man is entitled to the heaviest censure, who forgets the dignity of her sex, and acts as if she was utterly unworthy either of sensible converse, or common civility.

You men, Mr. Babler, are in general very severe upon the women; you laugh at us for talking about our caps, our ribbands, or our lap-dogs: I would advise your lordly sex, however, to look at home; and before they think of plucking the mote out of our eyes, to be pretty certain there are no beams in their own. Yours, &c.

AMANDA.

## Nº LIV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12.

As my fair correspondent Amanda's letter, inserted in my last paper, has given, I am told, a general satisfaction; it will not, I hope, be disagreeable to my readers, if I resume the subject, especially as I want to introduce a little journal to their observation, which was lately presented to me with the papers of a deceased man of quality, who was unhappily a man of gallantry also, and indulged a licentiousness of thinking, in some cases, that reflected no great honour either upon his humanity or understanding.

I have frequently remarked what a degree of nicety is requisite in the education of young women; and delivered it, as my opinion, that those parents were very fortunate, who, from the sex of their children, had none of the various consequences to apprehend, which the least indiscretion in the ladies is constantly sure of bringing on a family. I have said that the same levity of conduct which would steep a woman in the grossest lees of infamy, is entirely overlooked, if not publicly approved, in a man; and that the mere circumstance of sex gives him a kind of privilege to practise a number of irregularities, that would render an uncultivated female the scandal of society.

But at the same time that the depravity of custom has given this unhappy superiority to the men; at the time that our lordly sex is invested by the world with a prescriptive title of violating the most sacred of the divine ordinances, neither reason nor religion have given us the least exemption from undergoing that dreadful examination in another life, which is so fatally disregarded in this. When we see the most triumphant libertine in his moments of illness, or his hours of reflection, it is then we find that this boasted right of doing wrong is nothing more

more than a glittering gewgaw that leads us into a certain deſtruction, and ought to be lamented as the greateſt of all misfortunes, inſtead of being conſidered as a matter of conſolation, or looked upon with an eye of appetite or joy. To ſpeak in the language of the poet—

When we behold him languidly oppreſt
On Death's pale couch all ghaſtly and declin'd,
Or dragg'd before the godhead of his breaſt,
And damn'd to all the hells within his mind:

'Tis then th' intrinſic nothingneſs of fame,
In all it's pomp of emptineſs ſhall riſe,
Teach Wiſdom's cheek to redden at a name,
And Virtue's bow to furrow and deſpiſe.

Highly ſoever as the round of maſculine errors may be envied by the ignorant, or coveted by the profligate, I aſk the greateſt libertine exiſting, who is not utterly deſtitute of common underſtanding, how he would, upon a cool conſideration, chooſe to be thought the author of the following journal? though I ſhall give him a bit of encouragement into the bargain, which is, that few people in the gay world were ever better received than the perſon who wrote it.

THE JOURNAL OF A LIBERTINE.

FOR fear any thing of conſequence ſhould eſcape my memory, ſat down January the 17th, 1744, to make a journal of all my adventures.—Paid a debt of 500l. to Lord Worthleſs, which I loſt upon betting my mother's life againſt his bay gelding's; the old harridan having gone off laſt week with an aſthma.

Memorandum. To make my different tradeſmen abate a regulated proportion from each of their bills, till the foregoing ſum is reimburſed.

Turned off my houſekeeper Jenkins, for her inſolence in reſenting ſome innocent liberties which I caſually took with her daughter.

Sent a letter to my friend Hilman's wife, making an appointment—bleſt with an anſwer to my wiſh—dreſt for the purpoſe—uneaſy—Hilman ſaved my life once in the country, and broke his own arm in the attempt—lent me ſeveral conſiderable ſums of money—and ſhewed me ſeveral important acts of friendſhip—cruel to diſhonour him—the glory of the action irreſiſtible—my ſcruples laid aſide—a chair at the door.

Met Mrs. Hilman—happy—hinted it that very evening at the coffee-houſe—a challenge from the huſband three days after—diſarmed in Hyde Park—aſk pardon—curſedly down in the mouth.

At the Chapel Royal Eaſter Sunday—ſaw a fine young girl, about ſixteen, in one of the aiſles—ordered Will to dog her home—found ſhe was a hoſier's daughter near the Strand—made Will watch for an opportunity of ſlipping a note into her hand in the Park—ſucceeded on Thurſday—ſhe and a relation drink tea with me at a milliner's near Covent Garden next Sunday evening.

Monday morning. Laſt night detained Polly Homeſpun from her family—prevailed upon her to go into a private lodging—Wedneſday, Polly advertiſed—hear that her father, in a fit of deſpair, makes away with himſelf on Saturday morning—vexed.

May 25th. Heartily tired of Polly—ordered Will to pay off her lodgings, to give her a couple of guineas, and to tell her I had no more buſineſs for her—ſhall ſet out for the country to-morrow morning.

June 3d. In the country—horſewhipped Farmer Harrow, for paſſing me without taking off his hat—6th, caught his ſon Dick ſhooting at a mark near the road ſide, and took his gun under a pretence that he was going to poach in my manor.

10th. Ordered Rack, my ſteward, to throw the fellow that keeps the Croſs Inn into gaol—the raſcal having the impudence to think an accidental fire, which burned down his ſtables, was a ſufficient reaſon for me to excuſe him a year's rent.

11th. The inn-keeper's wife came with a petition—a likely black wholeſome looking woman, of about eight-and-twenty—ſpoke kindly to her, and offered, upon certain conditions, to give her huſband time for paying the money—refuſed with diſdain—the inſolent huſſey turned out of doors, and Rack ordered to proceed againſt the fellow directly.

12th. The inn-keeper in jail—a letter from the man where Polly Homeſpun

ſpun lodged, telling me that ſhe had been melancholy for a few days, and the evening before had thrown herſelf into Roſamond's Pond, where ſhe was drowned—curſt the puppy's impertinence for troubling me about the matter, and ſent him half a guinea towards defraying her funeral charges.

For the honour of human nature I ſhall ſtop here; the remainder of the journal is nothing but a repetition of cruelty and luſt. I hope, among my readers, there is no part of the foregoing memorandums which can be applicable to themſelves: if a ſimilitude ſhould be found to any of their acquaintance, let not the privilege of the ſex a moment extenuate the baſeneſs of the man, but let every body exclaim, in the language of Horace—

*Hic niger eſt, hunc tu Romane caveto.*

## Nº LV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Here ſend you a remark or two upon a very celebrated performance, which, in it's particular walk of genius, has been mentioned as a maſter-piece, and poſſibly produced more imitators than any other poem in this age and kingdom. I need ſcarcely tell you, Mr. Babler, that this piece is Gray's Elegy in a Country Church-yard: a piece, Sir, which though I much admire, I can by no means imagine to be ſo extremely perfect a work as it has been generally conſidered; and the following are ſome of the reaſons why I differ from the public opinion in this reſpect.

The very firſt line, Sir, which begins this elegy, is an unſucceſsful attempt at metaphor, palpably repugnant to the rules of poetry and univerſal experience.

The Curfeu tolls the knell of parting day,

Viſibly alluding to the ringing of a bell at the death of ſomebody. The author ſhould have recollected, however, that this bell is never rung till ſomebody is actually dead; and that, therefore, the term *parting*, is conſequently a falſe metaphor; had he ſaid, indeed, that

The Curfeu tolls the knell of *parted* day,

There could be no poſſibility of objection; but *parting* is every whit as incongruous here, as it would be in real life to toll a paſſing bell for a man, before he had poſitively given up the ghoſt.

In the courſe of the reflective part, we come to the following ſtanzas:

Perhaps in this neglected ſpot is laid,
Some heart once pregnant with cœleſtial fire;
Hands which the reins of empire might have ſway'd,
And wak'd to extacy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the ſpoils of time did ne'er unroll,
Chill Penury repreſs'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of their ſoul.

Full many a gem of pureſt ray ſerene,
The deep unfathom'd caves of Ocean bear,
Full many a flow'r is born to bluſh unſeen,
And waſte it's ſweetneſs in the deſert air.

Some village Hampden, who with dauntleſs breaſt
The little tyrants of his fields withſtood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may reſt;
Some Cromwell guiltleſs of his country's blood.

You ſee, Mr. Babler, notwithſtanding both the thought and verſification in thoſe ſtanzas are extremely beautiful, yet there is a lapſe of no trifling nature in the execution. The author, in the very moment that he intended to laſh Cromwell with the greateſt ſeverity, introduces him in the ſame company with Hampden and Milton, the objects of his higheſt admiration; and laments in the ſame introductory paſſage, that

Chill Penury repreſs'd his noble rage,
And froze the genial current of his ſoul.

It

It is odd, that a *noble* rage should ever be a *guilty* one; and somewhat surprising, that a person of our author's extensive abilities could find no happier mode of conveying his censure and his applause: indeed, in the two subsequent stanzas, he has endeavoured to explain himself a little; but, as Lady Townly aptly expresses it, it is nothing more than darning an old ruffle, to make it the worse for mending.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes.

Their lot forbade; nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues; but their crimes confin'd,
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

Here, Mr. Babler, in the second line of the last stanza, Cromwell is allowed his share of virtue as well as Hampden or Milton; and they, in the pronoun plural *their*, are dragged in for their share of vices as well as that celebrated usurper: so that upon the whole, though we guess the author's meaning well enough, the stanzas are nevertheless a strange huddle of inconsistency, and not a little injurious to the perspicuity of their elegant author.

In the epitaph we are told,

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Now, for my own part, I can by no means see any merit in being marked out by Melancholy for her own, though the conjunction '*And*,' at the beginning of the last line, seems to hint pretty strongly, that melancholy is a necessary concomitant of science. I shall be bold enough to affirm, that if the word '*But*,' was substituted for '*And*,' the reading would be much improved, and occasion a much stronger idea of tenderness, than what can possibly be excited by the present word. The epitaph was written on purpose to spread a tenderness through the mind of the reader; but the word '*And*,' making it, as I said before, a matter of merit to be melancholy, the passage naturally fails of it's intended effect; whereas, had it been thus—

'Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
'*But* Melancholy mark'd him for her own,'

We should have then lamented, that a worthy youth, enriched with the gifts of science, had the smallest reason for despondency, and shed a generous tear in sympathy with his misfortunes.

The last stanza, in my opinion, is either extremely perplexed, or extremely indefensible.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Nor draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

This stanza, if it has any meaning at all, can mean nothing but this: that it is improper to examine either the merits or frailties of the person deceased, since they are both alike reposed in one dread abode, the bosom of his Father and his God. This is the first time I ever heard of a human creature making the bosom of his Deity a repository for his errors; and, in the present case, I think the fault still more inexcusable, because the violence offered to reason and religion has no way assisted the poetry; this being perhaps as lame a passage as any in the whole piece.

From the foregoing cursory hints, which I have thrown out with no ill-natured design, Mr. Babler, I hope your readers will see, there is a possibility of discovering motes in the sun, and be a little cautious for the future, how they mention any thing as the criterion of merit, without first of all making a candid enquiry, to see whether it has not some imperfections. Yours,

MISERY MUSTARD.

## Nº LVI. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

MY nephew Harry called on me this morning, and mentioned one of my papers which was prodigiously commended by several of his acquaintance, particularly by Miss Cornelia Marchmont, who desired him, in very strong terms, to give me her compliments for the masterly rules which I had there laid down for the service of the ladies. I do not know how it was, but I received a considerable share of satisfaction from this compliment. Miss Marchmont is a young lady of twenty-one, mistress of every polite accomplishment, and every shining virtue; and carries in an exquisite sweetness of countenance, the most expressive indications of her fine understanding, and her excellent heart. My young rogue has, I fancy, a month's mind to her; and, if I am at all acquainted with the language of the eyes, Cornelia is no way displeased with that circumstance. Harry, as yet, has told me nothing, but I believe it will be a match; if it should, I intend taking up my residence with them for the remainder of my days, and shall leave my little all to them and their children.

The reader may possibly suspect, that I am more than commonly sensible of this young lady's merit, through a principle of vanity for the flattering encomium with which she has favoured my productions. I shall candidly acknowledge, that it made me somewhat vain; but I hope I shall be also believed, when I say, her complaisance no way enhanced my opinion of her accomplishments. And now I am talking of vanity, I cannot help observing how universally subject the human mind is to the attacks of this dangerous enemy; for my own part, though an old fellow, when I have written any thing which I conceive may be useful, or done any thing which I fancy may be praise-worthy, I strut alone in my study with a degree of consequence scarcely credible; till recollecting how ridiculous a figure I make in the eye of my own examination, I blush at my self-sufficiency, and immediately turn my thoughts upon some object which can be considered with a greater share of credit both to my modesty and my understanding.—But to return.

In the course of Harry's conversation with me, he said, that Miss Marchmont had given him a letter for the use of the Babler, which she requested might be inserted in the present number. 'This letter,' says Harry, 'she lately 'wrote in answer to a very passionate 'epistle from a young fellow who has a 'company in the Guards; and who, 'thinking her to be like the generality 'of the sex, imagined a few fine ex'pressions, and a red coat, were suffi'cient to render her insensible to all the 'duties which she owed to herself and 'her family.'

TO COLONEL ———.

SIR,

I Have just this moment received a letter from you, in so very extraordinary a stile, that, should I hesitate an instant to answer it, the integrity of my own heart might be called into question; or I might at least be supposed inclinable to encourage your wishes, by the appearance of a tacit approbation. To prevent the possibility of this alternative, I must take the liberty of examining your sentiments pretty closely; and I flatter myself, that, for your own sake, you will pay some little attention to the following arguments; lightly soever as you might be led to consider them through any solicitude for mine.

You set out with saying, how tender an affection you have conceived for me; and what a very high opinion you entertain both of my heart and my understanding!—Upon my word, Sir, you have an uncommon share of penetration; for you were never in my company above half an hour in your days, and during that time you yourself made so conspicuous a figure in the conversation, that I had not an opportunity of saying twenty syllables. To be sure, your subsequent entreaty is rather unhappy, when my amazing qualifications come to be considered; for the proof you desire me to give of a good disposition, is to violate all the dignity and decorum of my sex, by entering into a corre-

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ſpondence with an abſolute ſtranger; and the teſtimony you want of my good ſenſe, is to keep your delicate declaration of love from the knowledge of the only people in the world to whom it ought to be firſt of all revealed—my father, and the reſt of my family.

In the name of wonder, Sir, who are you, that you ſhould preſume to think me capable either of ſuch a meanneſs or ſuch an abſurdity? What mighty merit are you poſſeſſed of, that you ſhould imagine half a dozen lines are powerful enough to deſtroy all the principles which I have been imbibing for the courſe of a whole life? Or what extraordinary obligations have you conferred upon me, that I muſt, in an inſtant, ſacrifice my own peace, and the tranquillity of my family, for no other end but that of gratifying your inclinations?

O, but you love me; and therefore gratitude ſhould oblige me to return you a favourable anſwer!—Admitting the poſſibility even of ſuch a circumſtance; pray, Sir, let me aſk you, for whoſe ſake do you love me, mine or your own? If it be for your own, of courſe I am under no manner of obligation; and if it ſhould turn out, as I am very much inclined to believe, that you do not love me, can theſe fine ſpeeches of yours, do you imagine, protect you from my honeſt indignation and contempt? Surely, if your pretenſions were of a nature that merited any body's encouragement, there could be no occaſion for this ſiniſter method of urging them. But I ſee through your ridiculous drift, Sir: you are poſitive that your fulſome declaration of a paſſion will charm me into an utter diſregard for the ſentiments of honour and filial affection, and render my conſummate wiſdomſhip totally incapable of acting with the leaſt degree of prudence or common underſtanding.

O, but you mean honourably, and aſpire at the happineſs of my hand!—A pretty method you take, indeed, of ſoliciting my good opinion, by ſuppoſing me not only an undutiful daughter, but an abſolute fool! Be aſſured, Sir, if I ever alter my condition, a father's approbation muſt firſt of all countenance my choice; and a perfect acquaintance with my lover's temper and principles confirm it. But, to put an end at once to your ſolicitations, give me leave to inform you, that it is by my father's command I write this letter; and that the diſingenuous part you have acted on the preſent occaſion, renders it utterly impoſſible for you ever to obtain a favourable ſentiment either from him, or from

CORNELIA MARCHMONT.

I ſhall make no comment on this letter, but recommend the example to the imitation of thoſe among my fair readers who ſhall ever be in the ſame circumſtances with the amiable writer.

## Nº LVII. SATURDAY, MARCH 5.

I Was ſitting at home the other morning ruminating on a ſubject for my next paper, when the penny-poſt-man rapped at the door, and gave Thomas the following epiſtle, which I here preſent to the reader without the alteration of a ſyllable.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Am a conſtant reader of your paper, and am very often entertained with the eaſy and familiar manner in which, to uſe my Lord Bacon's expreſſion, 'you bring home things to mens buſineſs and boſoms.' Some time ago, I remember myſelf particularly ſtruck with the Journal of a Libertine, and thought it an excellent way of laſhing the vices of our men of gallantry, who claim an indiſputable right of deſtroying the happineſs of every family into which they are admitted. The mode of journalizing brought to my remembrance a little paper which I had written myſelf about ſeven years ago, and called, The Journal of an Author. At that time, Mr. Babler, ſome youthful indiſcretions deprived me of a father's protection, and I was reduced to the moſt miſerable of all diſtreſſes, that of writing for bread: but whether I had too much pride, or too little merit, or both, I ſhall not take upon me to ſay; but my ſituation affected me ſo much, that I once drew up the following ſtate of it for a week, and thought of inſerting it in a magazine with which I happened to be connected.

The

The printer, however, refused it a place; and my father becoming reconciled to me in a little time after, it has since lain by, and is now at your service for publication.

MONDAY morning. Rose at seven, to write an Eastern tale against eight—finished it in time; but going down stairs, the maid, who came up to light the fire, thrust it into the grate, and consumed what was to maintain me for the whole day—being nettled, I spoke in pretty severe terms about her negligence, when unluckily her mistress, who happened to be coming up stairs, told me I should wake Mr. Fustian, the actor, who lived in the two-pair-of-stairs room under me; and desired I would think of getting her some money, for I was no less than a fortnight in arrear—Silenced—and sat down to perform my task a second time; but the printer coming for copy, and being chagrined at the disappointment, some words ensued between us, and he swore to look out directly for another hand.

Three o'clock. Too proud to make an apology to Mr. Type—I sauntered to the Park, and accidentally fell into chat with a young fellow on one of the seats—In the course of the conversation, I learned that he was a writer too—so guessing his business in the Park to be much the same with my own—I took my leave of him for fear of entering into any disagreeable explanation in regard to circumstances—Eight o'clock, got sixpence upon my clean shirt at the pawnbroker's—and dined upon a mutton-chop and a pint of beer at the Black Lyon in Russel Street—An unexpected misfortune—upon coming to pay my reckoning, found the sixpence had slipt through a hole in my pocket, which I had never before discovered—in the utmost confusion — insulted before the whole company by the waiter, with the aggravating circumstance of hearing several infamous jests upon my black coat—relieved at last by the humanity of the landlord, who happened to overhear the matter—threatened to turn the waiter off for his insolence—and calling me out of the room, slipped half a guinea in my hand—but when I was going about to thank him, turned away, and pulling out his handkerchief, complained of very sore eyes.

TUESDAY. Paid my landlady three shillings for her fortnight's lodging—redeemed my shirt—and bought a pair of breeches for three and sixpence at a cellar in Monmouth Street—lived very comfortably on eighteen-pence this day and the following.

THURSDAY. Called upon by a printer, who wanted me to write something on the plan of Cleland's Mulier Voluptatis, assuring me it would have a prodigious sale—declined his offer—talked to about assisting in a commentary on the Bible, and offered five shillings a week for every number of my notes—accepted the proposal—having no other prospect of existence—proceeded immediately on the task—and finished a number, to my unspeakable disgrace, in a night-cellar that very evening.

FRIDAY. Mr. Compose came for a copy, and insisted upon my taking a pint of purl with him at the Cat and Bagpipes—advanced me half a guinea upon account, and passed his word to a civil well-looking man, one Mr. Heelpiece, with whom he happened to be in company, for a pair of shoes—charmed with his good-nature, I made him a present of four odes, which he was kind enough to praise prodigiously, and which I had afterwards the pleasure of hearing he sold for a couple of guineas to a bookseller in the Row.

SATURDAY. Invited to dine by my landlord, at the Black Lyon—insisted upon paying him his half guinea—but he had not yet got the better of his sore eyes—being a taylor, as well as a publican, he took me up stairs, and made me a present of a handsome suit of cloaths which he had made for me on purpose—saying, with a careless air—'Whenever you come to a chariot, Mr. Spondee, it will be time enough to think of returning the compliment.'—My eyes excessively sore at that instant.

SUNDAY. Quite smart—walked in the Park—and was applied to by several booksellers, who probably judged of my abilities by my appearance—undertook business for several, and after got money enough to live decently, though with an aching heart—The wives of some would criticise on my performances; and one good-natured lady, who was suspected of assisting her husband in a certain review, would insist that I should submit my pieces to her correction—this was so extremely irksome,

that

that I at laſt determined to try my fortune in a diſtant quarter of the world —when my father ſent his ſteward with the bliſsful tidings of reconciliation to my lodgings; ſince when I have entirely dropped my acquaintance with the Muſes, and taken many an agreeable tour with my landlord of the Black Lion, in my own coach, to the different villas about this metropolis. I am, Sir, your moſt humble ſervant,

SEBASTIAN SPONDEE.

## N° LVIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 12.

GREATLY as the degeneracy of the preſent age may be talked of, or highly ſoever as we may imagine the people of ancient times to ſurpaſs us either in morality or underſtanding, I am nevertheleſs perfectly ſatisfied, that there is as much good ſenſe, and as much real virtue, to be met with in our own days, as ever was found in the days of our forefathers; notwithſtanding the meritorious cobwebs of antiquity have happily concealed a number of their follies and their faults, and thrown a friendly veil of oblivion over no inconſiderable ſhare of their imperfections.

The writers of the preſent times are not indeed burthened with the monſtrous affectation which was ſo commonly met with among the philoſophers of antiquity, and therefore are probably held in a leſs conſequential light, both with regard to their principles and their abilities; this, however, if properly conſidered, is one reaſon why they may have a greater ſhare of the latter, though it does not, in the remoteſt manner, inſinuate an inference of their being any way inferior in the firſt. Many of the ancient ſages owed the greateſt part of their reputation to circumſtances which would entitle a modern to a dark room and a truſs of ſtraw, or excite the general contempt at leaſt againſt his folly and impertinence. What would we think of a philoſopher now-a-days, if, inſtead of arguing the world by the force of ſound reaſoning out of their vices and abſurdities, he ſhould be in continual tears about the former, and in a perpetual fit of laughing at the laſt? What would we ſay to any moraliſt, who would ſearch the public ſtreets at noon with a candle and lanthorn, and tell every body he met, that he was endeavouring to find an honeſt man? Or, what would we ſay to a Cynic, who, by way of exhorting his countrymen againſt the allurements of luxury, would make uſe of no other perſuaſives than bidding a total adieu to every ſocial enjoyment, and taking up his reſidence in a tub?

The writers of a later date look with a juſt diſdain upon ſuch deſpicable inſtances of affectation, and do not addreſs themſelves to the weakneſs, but to the underſtanding, of their countrymen: it is not the paſſions which they want to work upon, but the underſtanding which they want to convince; and are infinitely more ſolicitous to eſtabliſh a reſpectable opinion of their judgment and their integrity, than ambitious to purchaſe an immortality by the practice of any illuſtrious abſurdity, which, however it may dazzle a moment upon the imagination, the cooler reflections of reaſon muſt conſider with the moſt inſuperable contempt. Far be it from me to pluck the ſmalleſt bay from the brow of antiquity; I ſincerely venerate many leſſons inculcated by ſeveral of the philoſophers; but at the ſame time I cannot be totally inſenſible to the imperfections of their times, or palpably blind to the merits of our own: for this reaſon I muſt ſtand up for the character of modern underſtanding, and declare it as my opinion, that I think no two philoſophers, in the whole compaſs of antiquity, have ſurpaſſed Bacon and Newton, either in the extent or importance of their works; and, however I may incur the cenſure of claſſical readers, I will go farther, and venture to aſſert, that Shakeſpeare and Milton are poets of as much excellence as either Homer or Virgil; and poſſibly, if the Engliſh language was but half ſo univerſally ſtudied as the Greek or Latin, I ſhould find thouſands who would not heſitate to give a more exalted forum of reputation to the two illuſtrious moderns, than to the two celebrated names of antiquity, who have for ſo many ages been conſidered as a ſort of *ne plus ultra* to human genius, in every performance of a poetical tendency.

Having ſaid thus much in defence of

modern understanding, I shall say a few words in support of modern virtue against the heavy accusations of degeneracy, which some inconsiderate writers are but too apt to lay at our door, and but too ready to fasten on the credulity of the public.

It must be readily granted, that the history of modern times affords sufficient instances of vices, which reduce human nature to the basest of all levels, and throw the blackest stigma not only upon the dignity, but upon the very name of man: yet, if we take a review of more distant ages, we shall find equal examples of rapine, perjury, and blood. The civilized states of Greece produced as many scenes of ambition, tyranny, and murder, as can possibly be found among the most barbarous nations; and the virtuous Romans themselves, at the very moment they were affecting an uncommon sanctity of manners, were robbing all the world to inculcate maxims of justice, and cutting whole nations to pieces, to teach them lessons of benevolence and humanity. Greece had it's Philip and it's Alexander, if France had her Louis the XIVth; and Rome had her Cæsar, if England had her Cromwell; she also has a Caligula and a Nero to blacken everlastingly upon her annals, if ours are stigmatized with an arbitrary Charles, or a bigotted James. When I mention Louis the XIVth, I by no means design to compare him with Philip or Alexander in any thing but his ambition and his rapacity; they are in every other respect so infinitely the more exalted murderers, that the sensible reader will readily perceive in this respect I intended a very limited parallel.

Seeing, therefore, that the most celebrated of the ancient æras cannot produce greater poets and philosophers than what appears upon the modern list, I should be glad to ask what reasonable opinion can be assigned for our supposed depravity in understanding? And I should be also glad to know how the charge of a depravity in manners can be supported, when, upon a candid review of the ancient annals, they appear to be covered with at least an equal share of absurdities and crimes. That the modern æra is bad enough, we have too many lamentable testimonies; but there is no necessity to aggravate either our weakness or our guilt, by making us worse than former times; which, wherever we examine, were, in the general, a compound of the greatest villains and the grossest fools.

## Nº LIX. SATURDAY, MARCH 19.

WHEN the celebrated Voltaire was in England, he paid a visit to the famous Mr. Congreve, though he was utterly unacquainted with him; and with that happy violation of ceremony, which is the characteristic of elevated genius, introduced himself upon the mere account of their respective literary reputations. The Englishman was, however, disconcerted; and instead of looking upon the frankness of Voltaire's behaviour as the greatest compliment that could be paid him, he said he would be glad of being visited by Mr. Voltaire as a private gentleman, but could not think of cultivating a friendship with any body, barely on the account of being an author. The Frenchman, disgusted at this untimely instance of affectation, turned upon his heel, and replied, with severity, that had not Mr. Congreve been somewhat more than a private gentleman, he never would have suffered the trouble of that interview.

The slightest survey of mankind will convince a rational enquirer, that the generality of people are influenced by as injudicious a principle in their actions, as Mr. Congreve in the present circumstance. To avoid the imputation of one extremity, they insensibly run into another; and let the character be what it will which they are fearful of incurring, an excessive solicitude to avoid it exposes them frequently to one equally absurd, and excites, while they imagine themselves perfectly secure from ridicule or censure, the universal laugh or disesteem of their acquaintance. I am naturally led into these reflections by a letter from a correspondent, whose favours I shall be always proud of receiving, and whose good opinion I shall always study to deserve, while my leisure and

and my inclination allow me to fcribble for the amufement of the public.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the world feldom holds any fet of people in a more ridiculous light than your pretty delicate race of beings, who are unceafingly employed in the decoration of their perfons; yet, for my own part, I think the eternal floven to the full as contemptible a character as the coxcomb profeffed; nay, if poffible, I confider him as the worft of the two, fince, though the latter may provoke your mirth, he does not turn your ftomach; and is at moft but an object of laughter, without giving any occafion for difguft. I lately fpent a few weeks near Whitehaven, in Cumberland, Mr. Babler, where I had frequent opportunities of converfing with a very worthy clergyman, who formerly was my fchoolmafter, and who has as good a heart and as clear an underftanding as any man in the kingdom. As we kept company on the moft unreferved terms of friendfhip, my powdered head of hair and white coat was a continual fource of entertainment to him; and he would often call me a young coxcomb, if in walking through a wet field or a dirty road, I feemed to take the fmalleft pains about my ftockings, or expreffed a cafual wifh that I had not come abroad without my boots. A very trifling concern about the accumulating fablenefs of a fhirt, would procure me a lecture of half an hour; and a clean handkerchief once a day, was a piece of unpardonable foppery that merited the difcipline of a horfewhip. In fhort, Sir, being barely decent in my externals, was fure of drawing an imputation upon the little fhare of underftanding I poffefs; and in proportion as I was tolerably dreffed, I was certain of being told I had an intolerable degree of vanity.

The good-humoured liberties thus taken with my appearance, I conftantly retorted upon my reverend friend for running into the moft difagreeable negligence imaginable. If my powdered head and fmooth chin afforded him a laugh, I was no lefs merry with his antiquated grizzel and long beard; and for every farcafm thrown out againft my white cotton ftockings, I never failed to be witty on his coarfe yarn ones, which, through an abfolute piece of affectation, he continually wore half way about his heels. In this manner we ufed to joke when at a lofs for converfation; and it generally proved a matter of no little entertainment to the honeft country people, to hear us rating one another fo heartily.

This perpetual negligence in the appearance of my worthy friend, very often led me to reflect upon the motive which could induce fo many people of excellent underftandings to be fo extremely regardlefs of their perfons; and I never could imagine but that it was fome ftrange kind of vanity which in general produced this unaccountable flovenlinefs, notwithftanding to avoid every imputation of vanity is the univerfal plea of all the flovens of my acquaintance. Looking upon any remarkable attachment to drefs as a proof of a weak mind, your men of fenfe affect to be entirely above it; and, willing to enhance their own confequence by depending folely on the force of intellectual merit, they run to ftudied indecencies of appearance; and very often carry not only a dirty fhirt, but an unfavoury effluvia, into the politeft companies.

People of fenfe fhould, however, confider, that a cleanlinefs in drefs is not a little conducive to health; and that it can be no derogation from their underftandings, to make ufe of an occafional bafon of water in the fcowering of their hands and face. All extremes are an imputation upon our judgments; and the beft proof which men of abilities can give of their fuperior wifdom, on ordinary occafions, is to avoid the fmalleft appearance of fingularity. Wherever we fee men running into fingularities of any kind, we may fafely conclude, that the judgment is not perfectly right; but when we fee thefe fingularities have a tendency only to occafion univerfal difguft, we may be fatisfied, that whoever is guilty of them, is poffeffed of an uncommon fhare of pride at the bottom; and thinks that the accomplifhments of his mind fufficiently atone for any egregious difregard of his perfon.

Every man owes fomething to the fatisfaction of his friends, notwithftanding fo many people abfurdly imagine they are entirely formed for themfelves. A philofopher, or a poet, may challenge our admiration on the fcore of his abilities; yet if he facrifices all confideration

to a decency in his appearance, it is impossible he should ever be beloved. Converse with him we may, but we can neither chuse to sit near him at table, nor pledge him out of the same glass; and however we may despise a coxcomb for his vanity, and want of understanding, we shall be always inclined to give him the preference to a notorious sloven, both in every public place, and at every social entertainment. I am, Sir, &c.

VERAX.

## Nº LX. SATURDAY, MARCH 26.

THOUGH no man can be a greater admirer of English hospitality than myself, I have nevertheless been frequently offended at seeing this hospitality carried to a ridiculous excess; and have always imagined, where I saw the master of a house running into a large expence merely for the entertainment of two or three intimate friends, that he must entertain either a very improper opinion of himself, or a strange idea of his company.

I dined yesterday with my old friend Ned Grumble, the council at Gray's-Inn, with whom I went to school; and who, notwithstanding the smart air which an occasional queue wig gives him, is at least eight-and-fifty, and ought to know a little more of the world than what he manifested in his entertainment. There were but three of us, Ned, Dr. System the naturalist, and myself; yet we had dinner enough from the tavern to serve twenty, and such a profusion of luxuries, that the bare eatables must at least have amounted to six or seven pounds. To be sure, Ned is a man of fortune, and can afford to treat his friends very genteelly; but, for my own part, I never form my notions of gentility by the standard of extravagance. I do not love to see money unnecessarily thrown away; and always wish that people of condition would apply the superfluities of their income either to the relief of merit in distress, or to those objects which must promote the general welfare of their country.

As the various courses came in, I observed Ned was secretly pleased with the air of surprize which I naturally put on, and seemed to rise in his own opinion in proportion to the elegance of his table. With a look of indifference he pressed the doctor and I to eat hearty; and with a very ridiculous kind of an affectation, lamented that there was nothing which we could possibly like. He wished the dinner had been to our tastes; and with the long list of customary excuses which usually pass for good breeding in second-rate companies, he promised the next time we favoured him with a visit, we should be accommodated in a manner infinitely more to our satisfaction.

When I returned home, I could not help reflecting on the pernicious prevalence of customs in the generality of our convivial entertainments. The eternal endeavour at parade and magnificence, I considered as the natural result of vanity; and saw that by much the principal part of the world was considerably more studious to arrogate the opinion of their own importance, than to promote the satisfaction of their friends. Every dish which was added to a table, I found was looked upon as an addition to the merit of the entertainer; and he that was a clever fellow with a Turbot, was still cleverer if he could furnish a John Dory, or provide any other article of luxury equally expensive and unnecessary.

If, however, we examine this matter properly, we shall always find that an excess of preparation, instead of being a real compliment, is nothing better than indirect offence; it is a tacit insinuation, either that our guests are not generally used to such delicacies as we have provided for them, or that it is absolutely necessary to bribe the depravity of their palates, when we would desire the favour of their company. The great art of entertaining with elegance is to entertain with reason. To do this we must consult the nature of our circumstances, and the rank of our friends. If the first are narrow, we expose ourselves to the severest censure, as well as the keenest ridicule, by aping the luxurious abundance of a Lord Mayor's table; and let the latter be what it will, we should endeavour to treat them after the customary manner in which they treat themselves in their own families. For this reason,

reaſon we ſhould never inſult a poor man with all the magnificence of fifty covers, nor invite a lord to an humble ſhin of beef. A decent ſupply of good diſhes ſhould always be in readineſs, but nothing ever ſtudied for unneceſſary parade. Plenty, and not profuſion, ſhould be the characteriſtic of our board; and we ſhould conſtantly recollect, that thoſe are utterly unworthy the appellation of friends, who could wiſh us to ſquander a parcel of valuable pounds for the mere ſake of making an empty diſplay of our opulence, when the ſum thus extravagantly laid out might be applied to a number of very ſalutary purpoſes.

There are ſeveral people, however, who are hurried away by an unaccountable deſire of appearing extremely ſplendid in their entertainments, and make it a ſort of point to keep a table conſiderably above their circumſtances. I remember poor Dick Thornton would frequently invite people to dinner, and treat with Champagne and Burgundy, though he borrowed the money which paid the bill of fare, but the evening before, from ſome of his gueſts, or pitifully begged a fortnight's credit at the Mitre in Fleet Street.

Hoſpitality, to be ſure, requires every man to receive his acquaintance with the utmoſt cordiality and warmth, but it by no means deſires people of ſmall fortune to be conſtantly impoveriſhing themſelves for the ſake of keeping an extenſive circuit of company; neither does it dictate, that thoſe with full purſes ſhould ever run into extravagance. None, however, miſtake the matter more than young fellows who are juſt entering into the world, and have no other proſpect of ſupporting themſelves than the ſucceſs of their reſpective avocations. Betrayed by too great a generoſity of temper, they imagine they never can ſhew a ſufficient welcome to their friends; and hence they inconſiderately provide twenty or thirty diſhes for thoſe very men whoſe general round of living they know to be a plain ſimple joint, or a frugal beef-ſteak at a tavern. For my own part, whenever it has been my lot to dine with perſons of this caſt, the uncommon excellence of my entertainment has entirely ſpoiled my ſtomach; and I have loſt all reliſh to eating, merely from recollecting what a conſiderable ſum a good-natured young fellow muſt have idly thrown away, through a deſire of manifeſting an extraordinary reſpect for his company.

The publication of this little ſtricture will, I hope, in ſome meaſure, remove ſo great an abſurdity. People of good ſenſe want little more than a bare mention of their errors to produce an amendment: and by the reformation which I may hear occaſioned by the preſent hint, I ſhall immediately judge the underſtanding of my readers.

## Nº LXI. SATURDAY, APRIL 2.

IN the courſe of my little ſtrictures, I have frequently endeavoured to diſcountenance the ſcandalous propenſity which I have obſerved in a number of old fellows for an obſcenity of converſation; a propenſity which, even in the thoughtleſs and giddy-headed ſtate of youth, is extremely culpable, and no leſs diſgraces the politeneſs of the gentleman, than leſſens the underſtanding of the man. In the preſent paper I ſhall lay a picture before my readers, which, though really drawn for a particular perſon, will, I fear, prove much too general a reſemblance; but which, if it ſhould fortunately prove a means of reforming a ſingle individual, will make me think my time very well beſtowed, and induce me, perhaps, to take up the ſubject again at another opportunity.

Laſt night, having received a moſt preſſing invitation from an old relation of mine, I went and ſupped at his houſe. The company conſiſted of his lady, his ſon, and his two daughters, a very eminent clergyman in the city, and myſelf. My friend is one of thoſe people, who, having formerly cut a very gay figure in the world, is ſtill ambitious of ſpreading the May-bloom of twenty-five upon the winter of three-ſcore; and deſirous of diſplaying in the fulneſs of his ſpirits that ſprightlineſs and vivacity which time has relentleſly taken from his perſon: with this view he is everlaſtingly aiming at double entendres, and will not even heſitate to

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crack his indelicate ambiguities upon his children. On the contrary, he often attacks his daughters with a vein of the moſt culpable levity; and tells them, when the poor young ladies are ready to ſink with ſhame and mortification, that they know very well what he means, and that he is perfectly ſenſible they are both languiſhing for huſbands.

As my old friend ſuffers me to take more liberties with him than he can bear from any body elſe, I always endeavour to keep him in a little order; and this renders my viſits uncommonly welcome to his family. Laſt night I managed him pretty well, and we had not above ten or a dozen indelicacies during ſupper-time: but the cloth was no ſooner removed, than he cried—'Come, Mr. Babler, I'll give you a toaſt.' This was what the ladies extremely apprehended, and they all inſtantly roſe up from table, with an abruptneſs that would have aſtoniſhed a ſtranger prodigiouſly, and darted out of the room. Upon this he burſt into a loud laugh; and ſlapping me on the ſhoulder with an air of extraordinary ſatisfaction, exclaimed—'Well, my boy, you ſee I am ſtill Old Truepenny; and though to the full as heavily laden with years as yourſelf, have fifty times your ſpirits, and can ſet the women a going whenever I think proper.' Then turning round to the clergyman, and pointing to his ſon, he aſked, with an arch ſignificance of countenance—'Do you think, doctor, that fellow will be a quarter the man I am when he comes to my age?—Hey—what ſay you, petticoats?' The gentleman replied, he believed not; and my friend ordered us to fill a bumper directly, for he ſtill piques himſelf upon being able to drink a couple of bottles of an evening.

When our glaſſes were charged—'Now,' ſays he, 'I'll give you a toaſt.' He did ſo with a witneſs; and totally forgetting the preſence of his ſon, the profeſſion of the clergyman, and the ſobriety of my character, gave what would ſcarcely have iſſued from the underbred intoxication of an Iriſh chairman in a night cellar. For my own part, I turned round in diſguſt, the clergyman wiped his face, and the ſon ſtooped to buckle his ſhoe, in order to avoid the diſagreeable neceſſity of bluſhing for his father, whoſe behaviour was no leſs ill-timed than it was illiberal. I was in hopes the viſible diſſatisfaction which we all manifeſted on this occaſion would have kept my antiquated buck in a little order for the remainder of the evening: but here, Sir, I was miſerably miſtaken; every glaſs brought on a new inſtance of obſcenity, and produced a freſh queſtion, whether he was not the heartieſt cock, of his years, in the univerſe. The loweſt amours of his youthful days were raked up with the moſt paltry degree of oſtentation; and he ſeemed to gain a new ſhare of life from the mere repetition of thoſe circumſtances which ſhould have made him ſorry that he ever lived at all.

Youth is but a poor excuſe for a man's playing the fool; but no palliation can poſſibly be offered where a grey head is ſtriving to re-exiſt in the remembrance of former vices, and is ambitious of preſerving the ſame reputation for extravagancies in the deepening vale of years, which rendered him contemptible to the thinking part of the world when a boy of nineteen. If a man is really deſirous of being reſpected in the decline of life, he muſt act in ſuch a manner as to *deſerve* the univerſal eſteem of his acquaintance; inſtead of deviating into ribaldry, he muſt make an abſolute diſplay of his good ſenſe, and build his applauſe upon the rectitude of his own ſentiments, inſtead of applying to the depravity of ours. A debauchee of ſixty is no leſs a ſcandal to nature, than a diſgrace to morality; and we cannot help feeling a ſecret kind of horror, when we ſee a father profligately jeſting with his children, and taking every opportunity to ſteel them againſt the nicer ſenſations of delicacy and virtue. The parent who acts in this manner, has not only his own errors to anſwer for, but in a great meaſure the crimes of his poſterity. The human mind has a natural promptitude to err, and we are all of us but too fond of copying the examples of thoſe whom we have been taught to reverence and love. For the ſake of the riſing generation, therefore, let me earneſtly exhort the *old hearty cocks* of the preſent age, to pay ſome little regard to this reflection; ſince the reputation and welfare of their families ought to engage a conſiderable ſhare of their attention, however indifferent they may be about their own.

## N° LXII. SATURDAY, APRIL 9.

NOtwithſtanding a number of writers have very judiciouſly employed their pens in expoſing the ridiculous partiality which the generality of parents feel in favour of their own children; yet there is one ſpecies of this partiality which, though the moſt fatal in it's effects, has however engaged but the ſmalleſt part of their notice; for which reaſon I propoſe to make it the ſubject of my preſent diſcuſſion, and flatter myſelf that it will be received, on account of it's importance, with a particular ſhare of indulgence by the public.

The prejudice upon which I intend to animadvert, is the opinion abſurdly entertained by every body, that the beauty of their daughters will be always certain of making their fortunes. This unhappy prepoſſeſſion is now ſo univerſally adopted, that few parents attend to more than the mere ſuperficials of a young lady's education. A mother, now-a-days, inſtead of inculcating leſſons of prudence and morality, is only ſolicitous about the perſonal accompliſhments of her riſing angel: inſtead of teaching her to be humble, modeſt, and unaffected, ſhe lays down no rules but thoſe of pride; no precepts but thoſe of arrogance; and no documents but thoſe of affectation. Before Miſs is out of her hanging-ſleeves, ſhe is accuſtomed to the moſt extravagant praiſes of her own beauty; and is inſtructed in a belief that, ſo the delicacy of her complexion is attended to, there is no neceſſity whatſoever to pay the leaſt regard to the cultivation of her mind. Hence ſhe can argue upon the excellence of Naples dew, before ſhe knows a ſingle commandment in the decalogue; and deſcant upon the ſmartneſs of a ribband, before ſhe is acquainted with a letter in the alphabet.

The natural conſequence of ſuch an education is, that ſhe becomes intolerably vain, and inſupportably ignorant. The firſt of theſe amiable qualifications, her vanity, renders her totally blind to every merit in the character of another perſon; and the latter renders her as totally inſenſible of the groſſeſt abſurdity in her own. Calculated merely for ſhew, her only ſtudy is to attract a crowd of fools to the ſtandard of her beauty; and, taught that a woman with ſo exquiſite a face has a juſt pretenſion to the firſt offers in the kingdom, ſhe is continually aſpiring above the level of her circumſtances. By this means, ſhe moſt commonly withers in contempt upon the ſtalk of an antiquated virginity, or ſacrifices her reputation to ſome debauchee of faſhion, whom ſhe vainly imagines to draw in for a huſband. It is below a beauty ever to think of marrying with a man of her own rank; her charms are to procure ſomething infinitely ſuperior; and there is ſcarcely a tradeſman's daughter with a paſſable face, in the weekly bills, but what now and then thinks of an equipage with a tolerable degree of confidence; and imagines herſelf pretty certain, at leaſt, of a gentleman or a knight, though ſhe ſhould even fail of gaining a helpmate with a coronet.

The ſtrangeſt thing, however, in this unaccountable notion with which people are deluded, of a daughter's making a fortune with her face, is, that every one ſuppoſes the world will look through the magnifying-glaſs of parental prepoſſeſſion, and conceive juſt ſuch an opinion of the girl's perſonal attractions as they are ſilly enough to entertain themſelves, without ever recollecting that others have no natural intereſt in the young lady, either to be blind to her defects, or ſenſible of her perfections: they are aſtoniſhed that we ſhould differ from their idea of her merit; and abſolutely demand that tribute of admiration from our juſtice, which is nothing but the ridiculous reſult of their own partiality.

How often, I appeal to my readers, have they heard a mother extolling the face of ſome half-begotten thing to the ſkies as a miracle of excellence; and, in the fulneſs of her heart, exclaiming —' My beauty! my queen!' and ' my ' angel!' where the poor little wretch had actually the features of a jackanapes! For my own part, I have ſeen ſuch things a thouſand times, and among my own relations too. My couſin Suke has a little girl of about ten years old, who is blind of an eye, and ſeamed

seamed with the small-pox like a Savoy-cabbage; yet Suke imagines that her daughter will, one time or other, make a conquest of a nobleman; and has been known to praise the ineffable sweetness of her Patty's face, though the company were at that very moment talking about Lady Sarah Bunbury, or the Duchess of Hamilton.

Were parents, however, to act with prudence, they might easily judge, from what they themselves think of other people's children, how other people are affected at the sight of theirs. This single mode of judging would, in a moment, unbind the charm which fascinates the heart of so many fathers and mothers, and convince them that there were a number of requisites necessary to form a compleat woman, besides the possession of a smooth face and an agreeable person: they would then see, that a well-cultivated mind had an infinite superiority over the most rosy cheek in the universe; and discover that something more than a bare knowledge in fixing a head-dress, or pinning a handkerchief, was indispensably proper for the mistress of a family.

In fact, the men are not such fools as they may be generally imagined. A young fellow, if he wants to make an occasional connection with a lady, scarcely ever looks for more than figure or make. By the same rule that he buys a horse, he chuses his mistress. But the case is widely different when he comes to think of a wife: however he may laugh at prudence and discretion in himself, he always requires it in her; and thinks he is infinitely more liable to suffer in the public opinion, through the minutest foible of her's, than through the greatest error of his own: for this reason, the wildest libertine, when he thinks of marrying, generally looks out for a woman of virtue and understanding. Experience has taught him how small a share the mere attractions of a fine face have in the formation of real happiness; and if he chuses a person that *wants* a fortune, yet his choice is most commonly a person that can *save* one. Hence matrimony is the only thing in which he seldom suffers himself to be duped; and he hardly ever dreams of asking the hand of a mere beauty, while there is a possibility for him to gain a woman of real beauty and merit too.

## Nº LXIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 16.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE strictures in your last paper on the ridiculous propensity which the generality of people have to suppose the beauty of their daughters will at any time be sufficient to make their fortunes, are so very much in point, that I cannot resist a desire of troubling you with my little story, especially as it may perhaps be a means of preventing some other parents from following the unhappy example of my poor father and mother, whose ill-judged tenderness in this respect was the original source of all my misfortunes.

My father, you must know, Mr. Babler, was the youngest son of a good family, but had, however, no other dependence than an employment under the government, which brought him in about five hundred pounds a year. As he was naturally of a generous disposition, he never thought of mending his circumstances by marrying a woman with money, though he had a person and an address which rendered it no way difficult for him to succeed with the ladies. On the contrary, Sir, he followed the implicit direction of his inclinations; and before he was five and twenty, married my mother, the daughter of a Gloucestershire baronet, whose whole fortune consisted of a long line of ancestors, a high notion of gentility, and a very agreeable face.

With a disposition on both sides to make every thing wear the most elegant appearance, it is not to be wondered at, if on either there were no extraordinary notions of œconomy. I was born in about a twelvemonth after their union; and I have heard my mother say, the bare preparations for her lying-in amounted to near a hundred and fifty pounds. Being the only product of their affections, I was treated as if I was something more than mortal. In my earliest infancy I was discovered to

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have ſome irreſiſtible attractions. My mother, before my eyes were well open, declared them a pair of the right killing kind; and if I happened but to cry for a little bread and milk, my father found out in every ſquall ſome indications of a wonderful ſagacity. In ſhort, I was looked upon as an abſolute *Olio or ſalmongundy of perfections*, to uſe the words of a faſhionable author; and was almoſt in danger of being devoured, through the *inſatiable* fondneſs, as I may call it, of my poor father and mother.

When I grew towards ſeven or eight, and had paſſed the ordeal of a fiery ſmall-pox with pretty good ſucceſs, I was pronounced a perfect beauty; and my friends all concluded, that it was impoſſible but what ſuch a woman as I promiſed to turn out muſt make her fortune by her perſonal attractions. Infatuated by this unaccountable prepoſſeſſion, my mother's ſole attention was confined to thoſe accompliſhments which were rather engaging than neceſſary, and rendered a woman ſuperficially agreeable, without being of any intrinſic uſe. Thus, Sir, when other girls of my age were advancing pretty faſt in the progreſs of French, Italian, and Engliſh authors, I was ſtudying how to play at quadrille, or exerciſing the whole army of my little graces before the looking-glaſs. Inſtead of growing a miſtreſs at my needle, and aſſiſting to make up the linen of the family, I was inſtructed to laugh at induſtry, and told, that poring on a piece of work would inevitably injure my eyes, or endanger my conſtitution. Going to church, they as good as told me, was extremely vulgar; and it was hinted, that I ſhould ſhew my ſpirit, by taking care to rate the ſervants very ſoundly whenever they grew either familiar or impertinent. In ſhort, Sir, in this hopeful manner I reached my ſixteenth year, and knew nothing in nature but how to make a cap, play a game at cards, turn out my toes a little tolerably, and play a leſſon or two on the harpſichord.

As I was now bordering on the age when my mother expected my perſon would work miracles, ſhe took uncommon pains to tell me, that thoſe who were my equals only were infinitely beneath me; and that none but thoſe who were conſiderably my ſuperiors could poſſibly be as good as myſelf. Vanity and indiſcretion, the characteriſtics of my years, were open to every document of this nature; and I looked upon it as a derogation from my conſequence, to be ſeen in leſs than honourable company. For this purpoſe, I even condeſcended to be treated with indifference; put up with an inſult from the daughter of a man of faſhion, for the ſake of numbering her amongſt my acquaintance; and permitted ſome familiarities, not criminal however, from her brother, to purchaſe the honour of his attending on me in public. The conſequence of this behaviour was, however, fatal: before I was eighteen, I refuſed two or three very conſiderable offers from people of my own rank; and before I was nineteen, fell a victim to the illiberal machinations of a villain with an earldom, who viſited on my account at my father's, and flattered him with a notion of ſpeedily becoming my huſband.

Not to dwell upon this unhappy circumſtance, ſuffice it, that ſhame and diſappointment quickly broke the heart of my poor father, who died, lamenting with his laſt breath his error in my education, and was followed by his miſerable relict in leſs than ſix weeks. With my father died all my hopes of ſubſiſtence; and what I ſhould have done for bread, God only knows, had not a moſt excellent lady, who was compelled into a marriage with my betrayer, a little after I was undone by him, purchaſed me out of her pin-money an annuity of a hundred pounds for my life, and generouſly ſent it me in a manner that doubled the obligation. Upon this I have reſided near ten years in a remote part of the country, endeavouring, by a cloſe application to the beſt authors, to unlearn the principal part of what I was formerly taught; and to atone, by an exemplary conduct during the remainder of my days, for the indiſcretions of my paſt behaviour. May my ſtory prove a means of preventing the ruin of other young women; and teach ſuch parents as mine, that the only way of raiſing a real happineſs for their children, is to lay the foundation on diſcretion and virtue. I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

THEODORA.

## Nº LXIV. SATURDAY, APRIL 23.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THERE is a ſpecies of ill-breeding which I have obſerved to be extremely prevalent among ſeveral of our modern pretenders to politeneſs; and which, as it gives much uneaſineſs to a number of well-meaning people, I have taken the liberty of condemning in the following little narrative; and ſhall therefore eſteem it as a ſingular obligation, if you will lay it before the public through the channel of your excellent paper.

You muſt know, Mr. Babler, that I live in a tolerably genteel ſtreet, not far from Lincoln's Inn, and have made it my principal ſtudy during the whole time of my reſidence to give no offence whatſoever to any perſon in the neighbourhood. Unhappily, however, Sir, there is an antiquated gentleman who lives almoſt oppoſite to me, and who has a family conſiſting of a wife every whit as venerable as himſelf, two daughters to whom Nature has been uncommonly parſimonious in the diſtribution of her perſonal graces, and a ſervant-maid. As this amiable little community pique themſelves prodigiouſly on the regularity of their own conduct, they are continually upon the watch to pry into the behaviour of every body elſe. Hence, Sir, if a gentleman knocks at my door about buſineſs, ſome one of them continually runs to the window to ſee who it is; and comments, in a tone loud enough to be diſtinctly heard acroſs the way, either upon his dreſs or his perſon. If I have company with me in the parlour, ſome of them ſtand centinel on me at the dining-room; and if I take my gueſts into the dining-room, they mount to the ſecond floor, where they have a full command of all my motions, and reduce me to the diſagreeable alternative of bearing the whole torrent of their impertinent obſervations, or of letting down my curtains. To be ſure, Sir, I am not the only object of this obliging ſolicitude; as far as they can poſſibly ſee, they manifeſt a laudable anxiety for the conduct of their neighbours; and being fortunately ſituated in a houſe pretty remarkable for the convenience of it's proſpect, they ſtrike a kind of awe through a number of families conſiderably better than themſelves, and are almoſt as good as our reforming claſs of conſtables, to enforce the minuteſt propriety of behaviour.

Did their impertinence, however, extend no farther, it might perhaps be borne with ſome degree of temper, and they might poſſibly be conſidered as objects of our pity, without ever exciting our reſentment. But, alas! Mr. Babler, the buckling of a ſhoe, or the wearing of a clean ſhirt, ſets them into a tittering; and a little more powder in one's wig than ordinary, occaſions a horſe laugh. My wife, Sir, being as good-natured and placid a girl as ever exiſted, this diſpoſition gives them ſo great an advantage over her, that ſhe can never look out of her own window, and is always in the greateſt diſtreſs if the ſervant keeps her a moment at the door. If ſhe puts on but a freſh gown to viſit a friend, ſhe hears—'Lord, we 'are dreſſed to day!' breaking from the oppoſite ſide of the ſtreet; and if ſhe ſends home but an humble leg of mutton from market, there is a—'Pon 'my word, we are reſolved to live well, 'however, let who will pay for it!' Nay, Sir, my little girl, an infant under two years of age, comes in for her ſhare of this delicate treatment; and her mother having a day or two ago bought her a new bonnet, the child has ever ſince undergone the ſevereſt exertion of their wit, and—'God love you, look at 'Miſs!' is the continual expreſſion whenever the maid appears with her at the door, or takes her out into Lincoln's-Inn gardens for a little air and exerciſe. In ſhort, Sir, not an article in our dreſs, nor a feature in our faces, eſcapes the eagle-eyed notice of our worthy neighbours; and there is ſcarce a poſſibility of conceiving how very unhappy we have been rendered by this exceſs of curioſity and impertinence.

Were theſe good people themſelves, either diſtinguiſhed by any uncommon elegance of appearance, or amiableneſs of perſon, this behaviour would be the leſs extraordinary; but, Sir, Sunday is perhaps

perhaps the only day in the week on which they change their linen; and I have already hinted, that there is no extraordinary ſhare of beauty in the family. As for the father, he is an abſolute *Oran Otan*; a mere man of the woods; the old gentlewoman is the immediate idea of that venerable lady to whom Saul paid a midnight viſit at Endor; and the eldeſt daughter, to an unmeaningneſs of face that actually borders upon lunacy, joins a couple of tuſhes that project a ſurpriſing way from the mouth, like the forks of an elephant; the youngeſt, to borrow an expreſſion from the Copper Captain, has a 'huſk about her like a cheſnut,' which ſo compleatly abſorbs every veſtige of humanity, that I am almoſt at a loſs in what order of beings to rank her; and, therefore, though her ſex has perhaps been already aſcertained, I ſhall put her ſpecies down in the doubtful gender.

There is nothing, Mr. Babler, which betrays an underſtanding ſo weak, or a heart ſo malevolent, as an inclination to render others undeſervedly uneaſy. The people of every little neighbourhood, like the members of the largeſt communities, ſhould always endeavour to engage one another's eſteem by a mutual intercourſe of good, at leaſt of obliging, offices: true politeneſs, however this unfaſhionable ſenſe of the word may be exploded, conſiſts in exerting our utmoſt abilities to promote the ſatisfaction of our neighbours. A contrary diſpoſition, though it may be reckoned extremely witty by ſome, can be conſidered in that light by none but the ignorant or the worthleſs. Whoever thinks the approbation of ſuch an eſſential to their happineſs, has my full permiſſion to ſolicit it; but I will readily affirm, that every ſenſible and benevolent mind will hold them in deteſtation or contempt, and look upon them as an equal diſgrace and nuiſance to ſociety. What a pity is it, Sir, that, like other nuiſances, there is no method of preſenting them by a grand jury: as there is not, ſuffer me to preſent them in this manner, and be aſſured, you will have the thanks of many families in my part of the town, beſides thoſe of your moſt humble ſervant,

CENSOR.

## Nº LXV. SATURDAY, APRIL 30.

TO know mankind, and to profit by their follies, is generally the wiſh of the mercenary; but there are ſome who think, that expoſing their own follies to public view is the trueſt means of acquiring an inſight into thoſe of others. This method of a man's ſubjecting himſelf to voluntary diſtreſs, in order to become acquainted with human nature, goes by the name of ſeeing life; ſo that, as the phraſe goes, the young fellow is now ſaid to have ſeen moſt of life who has experienced moſt miſery.

I have often, with pity, regarded ſome of my more youthful acquaintance who took this experimental way of becoming philoſophers, and who thought proper to buy all the little wit they had by their ſufferings: and yet, in fact, when we come to examine this aſcetic ſect of ſtudents, we ſhall find them utterly ignorant of real life, and ſkilled only in the ceremonies of a night cellar, or the etiquette of a brothel.

It is amuſing enough to liſten to one of theſe gentlemen, who has the character of being profoundly verſed in life, exerting his ſuperiority of ſkill in company. He has a new phraſe for every thing: 'Tip us a wag of your manus,' is, for inſtance, Shake hands; 'Let us have a buſs at your muns,' is, Let me kiſs you. For ſuch humour as this, our unfortunate creature has had his head broken, his pockets picked, and his conſtitution deſtroyed, though fully convinced of his errors the very moment he was running into them with the greateſt avidity.

It has been often ſaid, that half the pains which ſome men take to be rogues could very comfortably have ſupported them in honeſty. With equal truth it may be ſaid, that half the labours which theſe men uſe in the purſuit of pleaſure, could have ſupplied them with a double portion of the means. Pleaſure is not ſo coy a miſtreſs as theſe men would perſuade us that ſhe is; ſhe needs not be purſued through the mazes of a night adventure, nor earned by the hazard of

losing a nose; the usual beaten tract to happiness is ever the surest, and to live like the rest of mankind is a strong presumption that the traveller is in the right way. When one of our blooded young fellows, with a true eccentricity of thinking, separates from the crowd, in order to enjoy higher delights than his acquaintance, he only becomes the object of contempt and derision, and, like a deer in the forest, he ever finds least safety when alone.

The ridicule of every age has been levelled against this absurd pursuer of life; and still, like the witch in the fable, as he has been hunted down in one shape, he has assumed another. In the Spectator's days, the buck of the time was called a *Mohock*; he afterwards received the appellation of a *Blood*; and, at present, he is called a *Buck*: the three characters of the different times, however, are very nearly the same; they differ in little more than appellation; and are all equally distinguished for malevolence of heart and weakness of understanding.

The most extraordinary circumstance in the characters of these worthy gentlemen who know so much of life, is, that scarcely one in a thousand of them knows any thing of life at all; or at best, like a maggot in a cheese, he only eats into the rotten part of it; and, after fattening for a season on the common of folly and licentiousness, he comes out pampered with nothing but ignorance and immorality.

Let one of the most experienced philosophers in the system of modern life come for half an hour into company with two or three rational beings, and he looks as if he was absolutely of a different species. Conversant with nothing but what he ought *not* to know, he is incapable of conducting himself, either like a man of sense or a gentleman; and, acquainted only with the despicable frolics of the Garden, he is at a visible loss if a subject of the least erudition is started; and perplexed if he hears a syllable bordering upon politeness or good-breeding; he languishes only for an indelicate toast, or an opportunity of introducing some paltry little adventure, which ought to be reserved for a set of intoxicated apprentices on a Christmas holiday. Even in the presence of the most modest among the softer sex, he does not hesitate to mention the name of some fashionable demirep; nor scruple to boast of a Newgate acquaintance with an executed highwayman.

Yet, notwithstanding this description of a *modern buck* is pretty exact, there is an unaccountable ambition among the greatest number of our young fellows to shew a tolerable pretension to the character. From a strange opinion that libertinism is a proof of good sense, they all sacrifice the little sense which they possess to become libertines, and are infinitely less fearful of being looked upon as profligates than being ridiculed as fools.

Those, however, who would willingly arrive at the good opinion of the world, and merit the secret approbation of their own hearts, must act upon a very opposite principle. Little as the world may follow the documents of virtue, it nevertheless admires them; and we ourselves are never more ready to venerate a man of principle, than when on account of our vices he treats us with contempt. Let us, therefore, instead of being what in our hearts we really detest, endeavour to arrive at what we are ambitious to be thought; and make that very pride, which hurries us into such a number of excesses, a laudable incentive to the road of perfection.

Virtue, in fact, wants only to be known to have a number of admirers; and as in the pursuit of those vices which destroy both our temporal and our eternal felicity, habit encreases our relish for persevering; so in the practice of all that can ensure our happiness here and hereafter, habit also impels us to proceed, and furnishes continual inducements which gradually lead us to the most exalted pinnacle of human excellence. The man, therefore, who will not be happy, has nobody to censure but himself; as the power is entirely in his hands, if he chuses but to exert it.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE

# BABLER.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

## Nº LXVI. SATURDAY, MAY 1.

THERE never has been a period in which greater pretensions were made to patriotism than in the present, though perhaps there never was a period in which public spirit was so utterly disregarded. Every man we meet has something to say about the sufferings of his unfortunate country, though at that very moment he is doing every thing in his power to prejudice this unfortunate country himself. In the course of my acquaintance I have known a man exclaim against luxury, who could not make a dinner without twelve or fourteen dishes; and have heard a woman of fashion commiserating the case of our distressed manufacturers, with the very same breath that gave orders for the purchase of a French silk, a set of Dresden dishes, or an Indian cabinet. Contradiction is the prevailing foible of the present age; and in nothing are we more unaccountable than in our eternal pretensions to consistency.

The most whimsical patriot, however, whom I have met with, is Ned Scamper. This extraordinary character has studied the celebrated fable of the Bees with the closest attention, and puts down every vice or folly which he commits to the good of his country. If he gets intoxicated, it is from a spirit of genuine patriotism. The national revenue is benefited in proportion to the quantity he consumes: and if he breaks the head of an unfortunate waiter, that is another instance of public spirit. The money which he gives to make the affair up circulates through the community, and is a cause of satisfaction to a thousand families. In short, Ned has drank, wenched, fought, and beggared himself, through an exalted solicitude for the general emolument; and is now close pent up in one of our prisons, out of a pure and disinterested regard for the welfare of society.

Yet, notwithstanding the little claim which the generality of this kingdom can really have to the character of patriotism, it must nevertheless be acknowledged, that we have some people who, in opposition to the torrent of fashionable folly, consume scarcely any thing but the produce of their own country. To be sure, these people cut but a very moderate figure in life; they seldom rise beyond the level of oyster-women, common soldiers, hackney-coachmen, or bricklayers labourers: but what then—both their beer and their gin are manufactured within the weekly bills; and if their tobacco is not the immediate growth of Great Britain, it is at least sent us from some of the British plantations. Nay, their very oaths are entirely of English materials. No *'Pon my honours*, or *Let me dies*, and such like despicable exclamations of foreign contexture; but a solid *B—t my l—s*, like a humming tankard of *Calvert's entire butt*, strikes us at once with admiration, and gives an equal proof both of their public spirit and understanding!

It is remarkable, that though these people are the best friends to the real interest of their country, they nevertheless give themselves no airs of importance, nor run into any insolent self-sufficiencies about their attachment to the

the good of the kingdom. On the contrary, they leave every arrogance of this nature to their superiors, who act upon principles diametrically opposite; from which we may naturally infer, that those are always the truest patriots who make the least demands upon our gratitude for praise; and who pursue the indeviable path of national welfare, without looking upon themselves as entitled to any extraordinary merit from the steadiness of their course. It is also worthy of observation, that the lower the situation of the British plebeian, the more inflexibly rivetted we find him to the good of his country; the more we see him wedded to his gin and tobacco: while, on the contrary, the higher we go among consequence and coronets, the higher encouragement we shall find given to every thing of a foreign manufacture, and the higher we shall find the nostril of contempt turned up at the produce of poor Old England.

It may possibly be observed on this occasion, that notwithstanding this great superiority which I give the lowest ranks over the very first, yet, if an enquiry was made into the principles of each, both might appear to bear a nearer similitude at bottom than at present I seem inclinable to allow. It may possibly be urged, that if the poorest orders of the people were able to furnish themselves with the luxuries of life, they would run into just the same excesses for which they are continually railing at their betters; and manifest as little regard for the welfare of their country as the most fashionable man of quality in the kingdom. Why, in fact, I believe they would; but this proves nothing more than that, with all our patriotic boasting, we have not a single spark of public spirit existing amongst us as a nation; and that, with all our ridiculous parade of free-born Englishmen, we are the veriest slaves in the universe to the worst of tyrants—vice and affectation.

The only way to recover our liberty from the oppressive fangs of such arbitrary rulers, is to make a proper use of our understanding. We do not want either spirit or good sense; yet, through some unaccountable impulse, we act as if utterly destitute of both. We can ridicule our follies, and be ashamed of our vices, yet never make the least effort to get the better of either; and there is scarcely a road to virtue but what we have the justice to admire, at the very instant we are giving the most unbounded loose to licentiousness and immorality. With regard, however, to actions of a public kind, there is a patriotism of the most exalted nature, with which we have hitherto appeared totally unacquainted, notwithstanding it is of infinitely greater importance than the encouragement of commerce or manufactures. This patriotism is the practice of moral rectitude, and the desire of setting a good example to our neighbours. Now-a-days, if a legislator delivers a popular harangue in either house of parliament, we set him down as the *deliciæ humani generis*; and, upon the mere strength of this single qualification, give him an indubitable privilege to trample upon every law both of reason and morality. If he exerts himself in a strenuous opposition to government, we are regardless how many worthy tradesmen he breaks by his dishonesty; and laugh at a violation of our wife and our daughters, where the ruffian happens to profess a real regard for the interest of his country. By this means we reconcile the whitest virtue with the most opposite vice; and imagine it possible that a man can have the highest veneration imaginable for our rights and liberties, when he is bursting through the most sacred of them all.

Let us, however, be assured, that a bad man never made a real patriot. He that is insensible of what he owes to his Deity, and to himself, can never be conscious of what is due to his country. The foundation of all public excellence is in private virtue; and where we find that wanting, though a combination of some peculiar circumstances may engage a great personage to support the interest of his country, we may rest assured that he is actuated by motives very different to the principles of patriotism; and that he only makes use of the fascinating sound to cloak the purposes of disappointed pride, and secret resentment. Where a man truly loves his country, he is tender of it's minutest laws; and pays an equal regard to the morals, as he does to the temporal interests, of the public.

No

## Nº LXVII. SATURDAY, MAY 8.

THOUGH I have more than once condemned the practice of toasting, as a custom diametrically opposite to every principle both of reason and politeness, there is, however, one species of it which has yet escaped my animadversion, though, perhaps, none of the least culpable: I intend, therefore, to make it the subject of my present discussion, and flatter myself that it will prove no way disagreeable to my readers.

When the fashion of toasting was first of all instituted, is by no means a necessary object of enquiry; but had it been judiciously confined to the limits of a tavern, and kept sacred for the purposes of midnight riot, it would be infinitely less entitled to our censure and contempt. The wild and giddy-headed hour of extravagance might probably palliate a casual gust of folly and licentiousness; but when, in open violation of all the dictates of decency, it is carried into private families, the least extenuation becomes utterly impossible, and indignation is at a loss whether most to condemn the ignorance or the brutality of the proceeding.

It is a just observation of a very celebrated author, that in proportion as every country is barbarous, it is addicted to inebriety. Were the people of England to be judged of by this standard, it is much to be feared, that our national character would be none of the most amiable. Notwithstanding few people can lay down better rules for behaviour than ourselves, there are none more unaccountably preposterous in their conduct: when we visit at one anothers houses, and propose to pass a few hours in an agreeable manner, how absurdly do we set out! instead of endeavouring to enjoy what Mr. Pope finely calls

> The feast of reason, and the flow of soul,

we think every entertainment insipid till reason is totally banished out of company; and imagine, through some monstrous depravity of inclination, that a social emanation of soul is never to be obtained, but where politeness and propriety are apparently sacrificed, and the roar of underbred excess circulated round the room at the expence both of sense and morality.

To the indelible disgrace of this country, there is scarcely a vice or a folly of our neighbours but what we sedulously copy, at the very moment we affect to mention the people whose manners we thus ridiculously imbibe, with the most insuperable disregard. Their good qualities are, in fact, the only things which we scorn to adopt, as if it was a derogation either from our spirit or our understanding to owe a single instance of prudence or virtue to the force of example. France, in particular, has kindly supplied us with an abundance of follies; but there is not, to my recollection, any one circumstance wherein she has given the smallest improvement to our understandings: not that France is destitute in sense, or deficient in virtue; it is we who want the wisdom of imitating her where she is really praiseworthy, and are infatuated to the lamentable degree of neglecting those actions which we ought to pursue with our highest admiration, to follow those which ought to be the objects of our highest aversion and contempt.

In the present case, I mean their convivial entertainments, the French are particularly sensible and well-bred; they are all vivacity, without running into the least indelicacy; and can keep up the necessary life of a social meeting, without borrowing the smallest assistance from immorality. In the most elevated flow of spirits, they never think of sending the women out of company, merely to give an unbounded loose to ribaldry and licentiousness. On the contrary, they estimate the pleasure of the entertainment by the number of the ladies; and look upon an evening to be most wretchedly trifled away, where a party of men make an appointment for a tavern. Thus their politeness prevents them from deviating either into folly or vice; and in the most intimate intercourse of families, nothing scarcely ever passes but a round of sensible freedom and unconstrained civility.

With us, however, the case is widely different; if half a dozen friends meet at the house of a valuable acquaintance, in-

stead

ſtead of treating his wife, his ſiſter, or his daughter, with a proper degree of reſpect, we all manifeſt an abſolute diſinclination for their company. The inſtant the cloth is taken away, we expect they ſhall retire; and look upon it as a piece of ill-breeding, if they accidentally ſtay a moment longer than ordinary: and for what are we ſo impatient to be left to ourſelves? Why, for the mighty ſatisfaction of drinking an obſcene toaſt, and the pleaſure of indiſcriminately filling a bumper to a woman of honour and a ſtrumpet; the friend of our boſom, and a fellow whom we conſider, perhaps, as the greateſt ſcoundrel in the univerſe.

In a country where the women are ſo generally remarkable for good-ſenſe and delicate vivacity, where they alſo enjoy in other reſpects an ample ſhare of liberty, and in a manner regulate the laws of propriety, it is not a little ſurpriſing, that in the moments of convivial feſtivity we ſhould treat them with ſo palpable a contempt. The hour in which we ſtrive to be moſt happy, one would naturally imagine, ſhould be the time in which we ought moſt earneſtly to ſolicit the favour of their company: but no, it is impoſſible to make an Engliſhman happy without allowing him to run into the groſſeſt illiberalities. The converſation of an amiable woman he thinks by no means equal to the roar of a diſſolute companion; and it is abſolutely neceſſary to make him *gloriouſly drunk*, as the faſhionable phraſe is, before he can reach the envied pinnacle of a *bon vivant* felicity.

The pleaſanteſt excuſe which all our choice ſpirits give for this extraordinary attachment to toaſting is, that without a toaſt, there would be no poſſibility of finding a ſufficient fund of converſation for the company. Why then are the ladies excluded, who could add ſo agreeably to the converſation? 'O, becauſe 'their preſence would be an invincible 'reſtraint; we could not ſay what we 'pleaſe, nor puſh the toaſt about;' that is, in plain Engliſh, 'we could not indulge ourſelves in a thouſand ſcandalous exceſſes, which would diſgrace the 'loweſt plebeian of the community: we 'could neither deſtroy our conſtitution 'nor our principles; neither give a looſe 'to obſcenity, intemperance, and execration; ridicule the laws of our country, nor fly out againſt the ordinances 'of our God.' Alas, civilized as we think ourſelves, is it not an impoſſibility for a nation of ſavages to be more barbarous or abſurd? The general conſequence of our convivial meetings is the ſevereſt reflection which they can undergo; for, with all our boaſted underſtanding, is it not rather an uncommon circumſtance for the moſt intimate acquaintance to break up without ſome broil highly prejudicial to their friendſhip, if not even dangerous to their lives?

To remedy ſo great and ſo univerſal an evil, to reſcue our national character from the imputation of barbariſm, and to eſtabliſh ſome little claim to the reputation of a civilized people, there are but two ways left; theſe, however, are both ſhort and effectual ones: to aboliſh toaſting in all taverns; and at all private houſes, never to make the ladies withdraw from company. By this means, in the firſt place, there will be no emulation among giddy-headed young fellows to ſwallow another bumper; nor any obligation for a man with a weak conſtitution to drink as hard as a ſeaſoned fox-hunter: and in the ſecond inſtance, the meetings at private families, by being conducted agreeably to the principles of politeneſs, will never ſwerve from the ſentiments either of reaſon or virtue, but be, as they always ought, productive of ſocial mirth and real happineſs.

## Nº LXVIII. SATURDAY, MAY 15.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THOUGH few people are leſs inclined than myſelf to cavil at the reputation of a great writer, yet it is with no little pain that I have often ſeen the public ſo much raviſhed with the *whiſtling of a name*, as to ſtamp the very errors of an author with the ſeal of admiration; and to think it impoſſible, becauſe he was excellent on ſome particular ſubjects, but what he muſt be equally eminent on all.

I am led inſenſibly into a reflection of this

this nature, from a conversation which I had last in a polite company, about the celebrated fable of Sigismonda and Guiscard, as translated from Boccace, by Mr. Dryden. This performance every body mentioned with an air of rapture; it was exquisitely tender in the sentiment, astonishingly nervous in the argument; and for versification, was superior to any thing in the English language. For my own part, Mr. Babler, I could by no means see in what the amazing merit of this poem consisted: as to the tendency, I am sure it is to the last degree dangerous; as to the conduct, it is both against reason and nature; and as to the literary merit, though there is here and there an emanation of genius, yet where there is one tolerable line, there are fifty infinitely too flat and insipid to be admitted into the last page of a common news-paper.

That I may not seem on this occasion to reckon without my host, I shall take the liberty of recapitulating the principal circumstances of the story; these, therefore, are as follow: Tancred, King of Salerno, had a most beautiful woman for a daughter, whom he married to a neighbouring monarch; but that prince dying, Sigismonda, which was the name of the lady, returned to her father's court, and was received with a degree of uncommon rapture by her father, who had always loved her with an incredible affection.

Unhappily, however, Sigismonda was of a most amorous constitution; the poet himself tells us—

> Youth, health, and ease, and a most
> amorous mind,
> To second nuptials had her thoughts
> inclin'd,
> And former joys had left a secret *sting*
> behind.

Had I a design to criticise severely on the last line, I should naturally conclude that her deceased husband had bequeathed her some marks of his affection that required an immediate application to the surgeon: but little errors are below a serious observation. The *sting* here mentioned, I suppose, means nothing more than an encreased desire for a bed-fellow; and therefore I shall wave a comment upon the expression, and go on contentedly with my narrative.

The warmth of Sigismonda's constitution, however, would not permit her to do without a lover. In order, therefore, to gratify her wishes, and yet offer no violence to the laws of virtue, she cast her eyes round her father's court, and made choice of Guiscard, who had formerly been a page in the palace, and was not a little celebrated both for his mental and personal accomplishments. Having determined in relation to the man, her next care was to make an appointment with him, which she effected in a very artful manner, and went to the place of rendezvous herself, attended by a priest, that matters might be settled out of hand.

Sigismonda having now obtained her great wish, a husband, contrived by every means in her power to keep the matter still a secret from her father: but unluckily, one day, as she was giving a loose to the warmest transports with her beloved Guiscard, the old king accidentally became a witness of their intercourse; and believing very naturally that his daughter was a strumpet, determined, and, in my opinion, not unjustly, to take an ample revenge on the man who had, as he conceived, so audaciously violated the honour of his family. With this view he retired for that time unperceived, and ordered a couple of sturdy fellows to way-lay Guiscard, and take him into custody the next time he paid a secret visit to the princess. This order was executed accordingly, and Sigismonda was stretched upon the lover's hell a whole night, impatiently waiting for the appearance of her husband, and burning at once with all the vehemence of the most ardent expectation, and all the fury of the most inordinate love.

Next morning, when she appeared before her father, the good old king, to preserve the dignity of both their characters, treated her with his accustomed tenderness till all their attendants retired: he then, in the most affecting terms, declaimed upon her guilt, mentioned his own excessive fondness for her, and begged she would say something in extenuation of her crime, since it was impossible to varnish it over with any feasible excuse. He concluded, however, with the strongest menaces against Guiscard, still imagining that he was nothing more than the paramour of his daughter.

O Hitherto

Hitherto Tancred's behaviour was nothing but what might be reasonably expected both from a monarch and a man. But the delicate Sigismonda, to establish the character of a heroine, was to act in immediate opposition to the sentiments of nature. Instead, therefore, of falling at her father's feet, and endeavouring to excite his pity and forgiveness, she put on the unblushing front of a Covent Garden strumpet, called him a tyrant repeatedly, and told him, that she had married Guiscard from an impossibility to live without an intercourse of sex with some body, since he (Tancred) took so little pains to get her another husband. That I may not seem to exaggerate, I shall here give part of Tancred's speech, and part of her reply—

'As I have lov'd, and yet I love thee more,
'Than ever father lov'd a child before;
'So that indulgence draws me to forgive;
'Nature that gives thee life would have thee
'live.
'But as a public parent of the state,
'My justice, and thy crime, requires thy
'fate.
'Fain would I chuse a middle course to steer;
'Nature's too kind, and justice too severe:
'Speak for us both, and to the balance bring
'On either side the father and the king.
'Heav'n knows my heart is bent to favour
'thee;
'Make it but scanty weight, and leave the
'rest to me.'

Here stopping with a sigh, he pour'd a flood
Of tears, to make the last expression good.

From this behaviour of Tancred's, and from the prodigious fondness which he had always manifested for her, Sigismonda had the strongest reason in the world to expect a pardon from her father; but no—she was to treat the venerable prince with the utmost indignity; to set an example of ignorant disobedience to all posterity, and to sacrifice the life of a man whom she passionately loved, merely because the poet wanted to make her an heroine.—*Risum teneatis amici.*—Here begins her answer—

'Tancred, I neither am dispos'd to make
'Request for life, nor offer'd life to take;
'Much less deny the deed, but least of all
'Beneath pretended justice weakly fall;
'My words to sacred truth shall be con-
'fin'd,
'My deeds shall shew the greatness of my
'mind.
'That I have lov'd, I own; that still I love,
'I call to witness all the pow'rs above:
'Yet more I own; to Guiscard's love I give
'The small remaining time I have to live;
'And if beyond this life desire can be,
'Not Fate itself shall set my passion free.
'This first avow'd; nor folly warp'd my
'mind,
'Nor the frail texure of the female kind
'Betray'd my virtue; for too well I knew
'What honour was, and honour had his
'due.
'Before the holy priest my vows were ty'd,
'So came I not a strumpet, but a bride;
'This for my fame, and for the public voice:
'Yet more, his merits justify'd my choice;
'Which had they not, the first election thine,
'That bond dissolv'd, the next is freely mine;
'Or grant I err'd, (which yet I must deny)
'Had parents pow'r even second vows to tie;
'*Thy little care to mend my widow'd nights,*
'*Has forc'd me to recourse of marriage rites,*
'*To fill an empty side, and follow known de-*
'*lights.*
'What have I done in this deserving blame?
'State laws may alter, nature's are the same:
'These are usurp'd on helpless women kind,
'Made without our consent, and wanting
'pow'r to bind.'

Sigismonda's harangue, you know, Mr. Babler, is a very long one, and in several passages contains sentiments infinitely too gross for the ear of a delicate reader. The public, however, from these cursory observations, will immediately see that the conduct of Tancred, if not totally excusable, has at least not a little to be said in it's defence; and they will also see, that highly as Sigismonda has been admired for her spirit and her virtue by a number of writers, that admiration has been much more the effect of their complaisance than the result of her deservings.

I am, Sir, &c.

CRITO.

No

## Nº LXIX. SATURDAY, MAY 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

WALKING lately through a church-yard to the northward of this metropolis, I was not a little entertained with an inſcription upon the tombſtone of an honeſt Cooper, which, by way of arrogating his conſequence, mentioned, that had he lived but two years longer, he had been junior warden of his company.

It is an abſurd opinion which a great many people entertain, that pride and ſelf-ſufficiency are entirely confined to the ſuperior orders of mankind, ſince the minuteſt examination into human nature would ſufficiently convince us, that the verieſt plebeian in creation has his ſpecies of vanity, and is poſſeſſed of ſome particular advantage, which, in his own opinion, gives him a pre-eminence over all the world: a ribband or a ſtar we generally imagine to be no inconſiderable ſources of ſelf-ſufficience; yet I have ſeen a farmer's ſervant, in his Sunday's cotton waiſtcoat, aſſume more airs, and ſtrut about a village with a look of greater conſequence, than ever I ſaw among a crowd of the firſt nobility in the drawing-room.

However we may look upon pride to be the offſpring of condition, a very ſmall ſhare of recollection will convince us, that the latent principles of it are equally implanted in the boſoms of high and low by the unreſpecting hand of nature; and perhaps, when we come to conſider matters a little farther, we may find that this very pride is given us by the particular goodneſs of Providence to reconcile us to our various ſituations, and to raiſe the chearful ſun of ſerenity upon that lot, which we might otherwiſe be tempted to look upon with a conſtant mortification and regret. Thus far ſelf-ſufficience may be looked upon, not only as uſeful, but as fortunate: the moment, nevertheleſs, in which it leads us to forget what is due to the merits of others, that moment it deviates from the original end of it's inſtitution, becomes criminal as well as ridiculous, and equally expoſes us to the univerſal averſion and the univerſal contempt.

The more we examine the behaviour of mankind, the leſs difference we ſhall find made by the circumſtance of rank. The vices of the moſt oppoſite orders, like their follies, are pretty nearly related, and ſpring pretty much from the ſame motives, if we may form the leaſt opinion by their ends. If the man of faſhion ſquanders away an eſtate at Newmarket, the journeyman artizan is equally ready to part with his all, at an humble game of Dutch pins, or the throwing of a piece at the ſhuffle-board: if his Grace finds the ſummit of human felicity in a *bon vivant* circle at Almack's, or the Cocoa Tree, the porter is equally happy over a tankard of *Calvert's Entire Butt*, at the Horſeſhoe and Magpye; and looks upon himſelf to be every whit as much entitled to a right of damning the waiter, and diſturbing the company, as the firſt lord in the univerſe; nay, in his amours, he is to the full as profligate, and will pick up his occaſional *fille de joye* with the ſame happy inattention to the conſtitution of his wife and the welfare of his family. Condition, in fact, is the child of Fortune; and rank, though it may poliſh the courſe of nature, can never totally alter it; ſo that to ſuppoſe the various ſituations of life are not actuated by ſimilar inclination in the main, is to ſuppoſe ourſelves totally unacquainted both with the ſentiments of the world, and the principles of common underſtanding.

To make a proper application of the foregoing reflections, we muſt conſider, that in diſpoſing of the various lots in human affairs, the benignity of Providence intended an equal portion of felicity for all: he wiſely deſigned that if the poor man had nothing more than a cottage, his wiſhes ſhould be contracted to the ſcanty limits of his little hut; and meant to bleſs him with as ample a portion of content over an humble meal of vegetables, as if all the luxuries of the univerſe were collected for his entertainment, and ſerved up in the moſt captivating rounds of an exquiſite variety and a ſtriking magnificence. It is generally the fault of man himſelf, if ever he is wretched. True happineſs, as I have already ſaid, exiſts only in the mind, however abſurdly we may ſuppoſe

pofe it to refult from an affluence of circumftances, or an elevation of dignity: he therefore that complains of being miferable, does nothing more in fact, than upbraid himfelf with inconfiftency; his wretchednefs, if he ferioufly enters into a difcuffion of the matter, will be found to proceed from the want of fomething which he can do very well without; and every foundation of complaint will appear to be the confequence of his own folly, notwithftanding the impious fuppofition that it entirely arifes from the unkindnefs of his God.

Of all the philofophers I ever met, I do not remember to have known fo truly fenfible a fellow as poor Dick Wilkins. Dick, by never indulging too fanguine an expectation, was fure to encounter but few difappointments; where he wanted real foundations for *affirmative* happinefs, if I may beg the word, he would build himfelf a kind of negative felicity; and out of misfortunes, which other people looked upon as irreparable, furnifh himfelf with continual fubjects of confolation. Thus, when his houfe was burnt to the ground, inftead of lamenting over the lofs, he rejoiced that he himfelf had not perifhed in the flames; and once, when the fmall-pox had fnatched away a fine little girl of whom he was exceffively fond, Dick returned thanks to Providence, that the diftemper had communicated to no other perfon in his family; by this means he got the better of calamity, and ftarted from the furnace of affliction with an additional degree of excellence in proportion as he was tried. Is it neceffary to enforce this example with the reader of underftanding? By no manner of means. Heroes and philofophers have been frequently propofed as objects of univerfal admiration; their lives, however, are infinitely inferior, in point of moral inftruction, to honeft Dick Wilkins; they may dazzle, but he delights; and though we dwell with a kind of awe upon the exalted tinfel of a celebrated name, yet reafon always gives a preference to thofe characters who have moft eminently diftinguifhed themfelves both as Chriftians and as men.

## Nº LXX. SATURDAY, MAY 29.

THOUGH it is univerfally allowed that we are every day arriving to a greater degree of knowledge in our theatrical entertainments, yet a number of fenfible critics are continually infifting that there is a vifible decay in our dramatical productions; not only our performers, but our writers, are mentioned in a light of the moft contemptuous comparifon with their predeceffors of the laft half century; and it is confidered, by the generality of people, as an inftance either of the groffeft ignorance, or the ftrongeft prefumption, to fuppofe any thing like an equal degree of abilities.

The gentlemen who criticife in this accurate manner, feem, however, to pay but little attention to the original inftitution of the ftage; they imagine it was entirely calculated for amufement, without having the leaft view to the great bufinefs of inftruction; and fo it could produce a ridiculous laugh, no matter what became either of our morals or our underftandings. This whimfical mode of thinking, it is eafy to difcover, has taken it's rife from the comedies of Wycherly, Congreve, and Vanburg, who always, with a culpable degree of levity, were endeavouring to fay brilliant things rather than juft ones; and injudicioufly imagined that a lively flafh of wit was a fufficient excufe for the rankeft indecencies, or the moft palpable attack upon the religion of their country.

That our dramatic writers, before the laft half century, might poffefs a greater fhare of wit than their fucceffors, I fhall by no means deny; but then it does not follow that this fuperiority in wit fhould entitle them to a fuperiority of reputation. Wit, in fact, is but a fecondary requifite to a dramatic poet; judgment is the firft qualification; and he that wifely attends to the cultivation of the mind, is by much a preferable writer to him who facrifices every thing to an agreeable flippancy of expreffion, and aims at nothing more than to excite the rifibility of his auditors. For thefe reafons, though I admire Wycherly, Congreve, and Vanburg, as men of wit, yet, as dramatic authors, I hold them in no extraordinary eftimation; on the contrary, I look upon them with the greateft

greatest contempt, for perverting the original end of the stage, and prostituting such abilities as they possessed in the infamous purposes of licentiousness and immorality.

I am well aware that upon this occasion it will be remarked, that the literary levity of these celebrated writers was the vice of their age; and that, in conformity to the general opinion, they were under a necessity of writing to the depravities of the people. 'If,' say a number of our sagacious critics, 'the 'authors under consideration represented human nature in a dissolute 'light, they represented human nature 'as they found it. Their villains and 'their strumpets were characters very 'frequently met with, and they only 'caught the manners as they rose to reflect them with an additional energy 'on the public.' This argument is evidently fallacious, and can scarce deserve a serious examination: to represent human nature as they found it, would have given no room for exception; but their great error was in representing those parts of it in an amiable light, which were entitled to universal abhorrence and contempt. Their villains and their strumpets were set up as objects of general admiration; and vice fought under the mask of an agreeable vivacity, with a success that should make every feeling mind tremble, lest so dangerous a weapon as wit should at any future period be unhappily lodged in such desperate hands.

It has often filled me with astonishment to hear men of good sense frequently arguing in defence of Wycherly, Congreve, and Vanburg; by saying that their wit should be an excuse for their licentiousness; and pleading that it was even worth our while to have vicious compositions, provided the vice was but decorated with such forcible attractions as these writers have given it. People who talk in this manner may indeed look down upon the correcter productions of later days with an air of insuperable disgust; they may equally laugh at nature and instruction, and affect to ridicule every argument to which they find themselves unable to reply; but the judicious enquirer will consider wit, when employed in the destruction of virtue, as the most infamous of all prostitutions. It is like a man of genius, who argues against the existence of the Deity; and becomes obnoxious to society in proportion as he is cursed with abilities; instead, therefore, of being found a justification of the writers in dispute, it becomes, in my opinion, an invincible objection to their works; and the more we are fascinated with the brilliancy of their productions, the more we see a necessity for wishing those productions had perished at their first appearance under the hands of the common executioner.

The writers of the present times, however despised by the bigots of a dramatical heresy, have, if we may judge by their performances, an infinitely stronger claim to our admiration than any of their celebrated predecessors, who, actuated by an illiberal thirst of fame, were led to seek it from the depravities of mankind. They sensibly recollect the sole end of the stage is to blend amusement with instruction, and therefore never neglect the heart through a view of bawding to the imagination; hence, instead of finding them eternally on the scent for snip-snap and repartee, we see them studious in the discovery of manly sentiments and laudable reflections; and observe a general endeavour, while they labour for our approbation as writers, to obtain our good opinion as men. This good opinion they will be always sure of obtaining, as long as they prosecute the exalted principles which have hitherto influenced their conduct; and it is with the greatest satisfaction I see their pieces frequently represented to crouded audiences, while the productions of a Wycherly, a Congreve, and a Vanburg, are suffered to languish in the most merited contempt.

## Nº LXXI. SATURDAY, JUNE 5.

I Know nothing more dangerous than for a man of narrow circumstances to possess an agreeable voice, or to be master of any other requisite which exposes him to a continual round of company, and renders him particularly entertaining to his acquaintance. In such a case, the general applause with which he

he meets, gives him an eternal disguſt to induſtry; and fills him with no ambition but that of being called upon for another ſong, or requeſted to relate the laſt frolic within the purlieus of the Garden.

I was yeſterday taking a ſolitary walk in the Park, when I accidentally ſaw a figure ſeated on one of the benches, with the lines of whoſe face I found myſelf ſomewhat familiar; and in the courſe of half a turn recollected that it was a young fellow who had formerly been clerk to my friend Mr. Demur, a counſellor in Lincoln's Inn, and was turned away by his maſter for a total neglect of buſineſs. I had been often at Mr. Demur's, and had always heard him ſpeak of this young man with a particular eſteem: to me he frequently recommended him on the ſcore of uncommon honeſty, and extraordinary abilities; nevertheleſs, he at the ſame time obſerved, that he never would be worth a groat. 'The blockhead,' he uſed to ſay, 'ſings 'an excellent ſong, and has a fund of 'humour that renders him infinitely 'entertaining: on this account he has 'ſuch a number of engagements upon 'his hands, that I cannot keep him a 'moment at the deſk; and though I 'love him almoſt as well as my own 'ſon, I muſt look out for ſome body 'elſe to ſupply his place.'

When I came down the walk, the young fellow bowed to me; and as his appearance was uncommonly ſhabby, I had either the curioſity or the good-nature to go over to him, and enquire what brought him into ſuch a miſerable plight: with the frankneſs that always accompanies a good heart, he told me it was his own folly; and added, that thoſe who wantonly ſported with their own felicity, ought never to be pitied in the day of diſtreſs. The manner in which theſe laſt words were delivered, ſtruck me very ſenſibly; I therefore ſat down with him on the bench, and requeſted, if he could with propriety, that he would favour me with his ſtory, aſſuring him, I always had a tear at the ſervice of the unfortunate, and probably he might experience that I had ſomething elſe. Encouraged by this information, he gave a bow of aſſent, and proceeded with the following little narrative—

'It is unneceſſary, Sir, to tell you 'any thing about my education or fa'mily; ſuffice it, that though the former 'was not deſpicable, nor the latter un'genteel, yet I had nothing to depend 'upon but my profeſſion; this indeed 'afforded me a tolerable probability of 'paſſing decently through life, had not 'an unhappy propenſity to company fa'tally intervened, and rendered that 'application to buſineſs intolerable, 'which prudence pointed out as the only 'means of my ſupport.

'This propenſity to company was 'increaſed to a conſiderable degree, 'from ſome trifling talents which I poſ'ſeſſed to amuſe, ſuch as a paſſable 'ſong, and a mode of telling a ſtory 'with tolerable ſucceſs. Theſe quali'fications procured me ſo much regard 'among my friends, that there never 'was a merry meeting appointed but 'Will Hargrave received an invitation; 'they were ſure he would favour them 'with a joyous catch; and often theſe 'applications were made with a ſolici'tude which tickled my vanity ſo high'ly, that I have ſuffered myſelf to be 'engaged a whole month without in'termiſſion, and kept as regular a liſt 'of my various taverns, as if I had been 'allowed a very handſome ſalary for 'my attendance. A cuſtom of this 'nature could not be ſupported with'out a great deal of expence; a crown 'or half a guinea every night was ra'ther too much for a man who, with 'ſalary and perquiſites, ſcarcely made 'eighty pounds a year; the conſequence 'of which was, that I ran into debt 'with every body that would truſt me, 'and forfeited my reputation through 'an utter inability of diſcharging their 'demands: beſides this, as I was al'ways one of the laſt people who quit'ted company, I was generally intoxi'cated before I retired, and deſtroyed 'my conſtitution as much as I ruined 'my circumſtances. A man who con'ſtantly went to bed in ſuch a condi'tion, at four or five o'clock in the 'morning, was but ill qualified for the 'neceſſary buſineſs of the day. After 'putting up with a thouſand irregula'rities, your friend Mr. Demur at laſt 'diſmiſſed me; and my character be'ing pretty well known to all the gen'tlemen of the profeſſion, not a ſoul of 'them would receive me into his em'ploy. In this ſituation, a vintner, 'whoſe houſe I had often filled with 'company, arreſted me for a debt of 'fourteen pounds, threw me into jail,

'and

'and kept me there till I was ſet at liberty by an act of grace at the end of four years. The hardſhips I underwent during the time of my confinement were unſpeakable; for days together I have ſubſiſted on nothing but the common allowance of the priſon, and have thought myſelf happy if I could get a handful of ſtraw to ſleep on at night: a ſhirt was a luxury with which I was utterly unacquainted for eighteen months; and, during the laſt year, my entire wardrobe conſiſted of an old plaid night-gown, a pair of decayed Morocco ſlippers of different colours, a worſted night-cap, and a black ſtock. I almoſt forgot the uſe of breeches and ſtockings; and could, I dare ſay, have paſſed a winter in Greenland without any apprehenſion from the coldneſs of the ſeaſon or the place. Fortunately, a week or two before my releaſe, an Iriſh author, who was juſt put in for libelling the government, happened to hear of me, and gave me an invitation to his room. I had long learned to diſregard the delicacies of dreſs, and therefore attended him without delay; he was ſenſible and generous in every reſpect, unleſs his compaſſion to me ſhould be reckoned an impeachment either of his underſtanding or his munificence; for, before I took my leave, he made me a preſent of two very handſome ſuits of cloaths, and half a dozen ruffled ſhirts, together with every other neceſſary, ſuch as hat and wig, ſhoes and ſtockings; ſo that when I equipped myſelf, I might eaſily have made my eſcape at the gate, as it was ſcarcely poſſible to know me in ſuch a happy alteration of circumſtances. My benefactor's generoſity did not ſtop here; for, the morning after I was diſcharged, he ſent me five guineas; and wiſhing me every happineſs I could wiſh myſelf, adviſed me to make a good uſe of what inſtruction I had received in the ſchool of adverſity. I intended to have thanked him the next day; but, unhappily, that evening he had a difference with a brother priſoner about ſome inconſiderable ſubject of a political nature, in which he received the lye. This being an affront which an Iriſhman never pardons, he inſiſted upon inſtant ſatisfaction: both parties immediately drew; and my generous friend by ſome accident happening to ſtumble juſt as his antagoniſt was making a lounge, he received a thruſt through the body, and expired on the ſpot. The other gentleman was tried; but as it was proved the challenge was given by the deceaſed, the ſurvivor had a verdict of manſlaughter brought in againſt him, and ſuffered the puniſhment of being burned with a *cold iron*, agreeable to the cuſtomary practice.

'To return, however, to myſelf—Being now quite clear with the world, and dreſſed in a manner tolerably ſmart, I ſallied forth, and was met by ſome of my quondam acquaintance, who, when I was periſhing, would not ſupply me with a ſixpence, but who now were rejoiced at ſeeing me in ſo happy a ſituation: they inſiſted on my ſpending the evening with them at the club, which they held every night in the neighbourhood of Temple Bar; and hoped I would not take it amiſs if they inſiſted upon charging my quota to the general account, for the pleaſure of my company. I was not loſt to ſenſibility: in the meridian of my own little affluence I had done kind things to others, but never inſulted their diſtreſſes. The manner of the propoſal affected me, though I was under a neceſſity of agreeing to the propoſal itſelf; I therefore went, and was treated with all the uſual diſreſpect which poverty generally feels from underbred proſperity. I was commanded to ſing by one with a look of authority; a ſecond ordered me to tell a ſtory; and a third cracked an inſolent joke about my want of breeches in priſon; and told me, with a loud laugh, I would have made an excellent Highlander. In ſhort, though every body courted my converſation, yet every body treated me with contempt; and I never ſuffered more ſeverely under the hand of inſolence, than when I miniſtered moſt to it's ſatiſfaction: though I tore my lungs almoſt to pieces for half a dozen hours, ſtill I was under an obligation for being treated to a two-ſhilling reckoning; and it even now has come to ſuch a paſs, that I am looked upon as an incumbrance to the ſociety. Not knowing where to get a bit of bread, I came here to-day, intending to liſt myſelf in the Guards; but being torn by a

'thouſand

'thouſand different thoughts, I threw myſelf into this ſeat to ruminate a little further, when the earneſtneſs with which you were pleaſed to eye me obliged me to pull off my hat, and laid a foundation for all this inſignificant garrulity.'

Here poor Mr. Hargrave ended. I will not comment on this ſtory; if the relation itſelf is not capable of inſtruction, it is in vain to moralize, and in vain to talk of prudence and œconomy: all I ſhall therefore mention is, that he ſets out next week in a lucrative employ for one of our plantations; and I doubt not, as he is yet a very young man, but a few years will ſee him in poſſeſſion of a very ample fortune.

## Nº LXXII. SATURDAY, JUNE 12.

I Was chatting yeſterday evening over a diſh of tea at my ſiſter Rattle's, when the amiable Kitty Harold, a diſtant relation of ours, happened to come in with her uſual freedom, but with an appearance of mingled concern and reſentment. The moment ſhe ſaw me, ſhe cried—'O, Mr. Babler, I have an admirable ſubject for your next paper! You muſt know,' continued ſhe, 'that in my way here I accidentally called at your old acquaintance Mrs. Acid's, in Pall Mall, and found her engaged with an extenſive circle of company. While I ſtaid there, one of the footmen came up and informed his lady that there was a well-dreſſed gentlewoman below enquiring after her health; but that, hearing ſhe was ſo much engaged, ſhe was preparing to go away, and would take ſome other opportunity of paying her reſpects. Mrs. Acid, you know, is one of thoſe prodigiouſly important people who pique themſelves upon their ſuperior underſtandings, and are continually giving an air of conſequence to the minuteſt actions: in hopes, therefore, of diſplaying her ſagacity before her company, ſhe ſent to deſire the lady would be ſo kind as to walk up; in conſequence of which, a mighty genteel woman indeed was introduced, who came in with a very viſible diffidence, and was with much preſſing prevailed upon to ſit down. "Madam," ſays Mrs. Acid, with her cuſtomary dignity of tone and ſolemnity of feature, "pray, what has procured me the honour of this viſit?" The lady, with a reſpectful heſitation, replied—"I thought, Madam, I ſhould have found you alone, or I would not have preſumed— But I ſuppoſe you have quite forgot a Sally Edwards, who lived with you about ſeven years ago?"—"What!" exclaimed Mrs. Acid, in an air of the greateſt ſurprize, "are you Sally Edwards, who lived with me at Richmond, and had a baſtard by young Mr. Barrington of Twickenham?— O, I remember you very well—Why, I hear he has ſince married you—Well, and come, tell me." Mrs. Acid would probably have continued this good-natured ſtrain conſiderably longer, had not the poor woman's confuſion got the better of her ſpirits, and thrown her into a fit, from which ſhe was not recovered without much difficulty: as ſoon, however, as ſhe came to herſelf, ſhe burſt into tears; and, making as decent a curtſey as her ſituation could poſſibly admit, went out of the room. Unmoved with her diſtreſs, the obliging Mrs. Acid called after her down ſtairs—"Don't be uneaſy, Sally; when you come this way again, pray bring the little boy with you." I really could have ſlapt the unmerciful woman for her barbarity: but ſhe, as if ſhe had performed the moſt meritorious action in the world, turned round to the company, and gave us the following hiſtory of poor Sally Edwards.

'Her father was a Shropſhire clergyman, of very little preferment in the church; but if a large family might be looked upon as a foundation for felicity, there was not a happier man in the country, for he had fourteen children. The excellence of his character, however, made ſome proviſion for the moſt of them; and one friend or another gradually took the greateſt number off his hands. This Sally, of all his children, was the greateſt favourite; he would never part with her, but brought her up with a remarkable degree of tenderneſs;

neſs; and even pinched himſelf very frequently to give her an education rather ſuperior to her fortune. His ſolicitude for her improvement, Mrs. Acid declares, was not thrown away: on the contrary, ſhe aſſured us that Sally was very prettily accompliſhed; and added, in her way, that ſhe was alſo not intolerably tempered, nor much unacquainted with the management of a family.

'When Sally had reached her twentieth year, a fever, which her father had caught in attending a poor pariſhioner, carried him off; and the amiable orphan was obliged to look out for ſome tolerable family, where her ſervitude might furniſh her with bread. Mrs. Acid at that time happened to be down at her ſiſter's in Shropſhire, near whoſe houſe Mr. Edwards had lived. At her ſiſter's requeſt ſhe took Sally, being then without a maid, and in a few weeks after departed for London. From thence ſhe removed to Richmond, where Sally became by ſome means acquainted with a very genteel young fellow, one Mr. Barrington, the ſon of a gentleman who poſſeſſed two thouſand pounds a year. Mr. Barrington made uſe of numberleſs arts to ſteal her from the paths of virtue, and even offered half the reverſion of his father's eſtate to purchaſe her diſgrace. Theſe overtures Sally treated with a becoming ſcorn; yet ſhe had a latent prepoſſeſſion in his favour, which would not ſuffer her to reſign the dangerous pleaſure of his acquaintance. Every hour ſhe could ſpare was paſſed with him; and he kept himſelf ſo ſecretly concealed, that his rank was never once ſuſpected in the neighbourhood. Young Barrington did not want honour; he ſaw the goodneſs of his miſtreſs's heart, notwithſtanding the humility of her ſtation; and therefore, diſregarding what the world might ſay on the occaſion, very frankly propoſed to marry her. This propoſal immediately ruined the unfortunate Sally Edwards: what formerly he could not obtain for worlds, now fell an eaſy ſacrifice to his generoſity. She confeſſed ſhe loved him; but abſolutely refuſed the honour of his hand till after the death of his father, declaring ſhe could not ſupport the ſhock of creating a diſturbance in his family. When a woman once owns her love for a man, there is ſcarce a toſs up between her and deſtruction. Every hour ſhe is alone with him, after ſuch a confeſſion, ſhe totters on the verge of her fate; and, even let the man have ever ſo much honour, there are times in which the whirlwind of his paſſions will tear up every trace of recollection, and occaſion more guilt in a ſecond, than can poſſibly be atoned for in the courſe of a whole life. In one of theſe times Mr. Barrington met Sally Edwards; and, in about ſix months after, the conſequences of this criminal intercourſe obliged the unhappy girl to take an abrupt leave of her place. The ſequel, however, is more fortunate than could be expected. Old Mr. Barrington died near a twelvemonth ſince, and his ſon has been married to Sally above half a year. This, it ſeems, was her firſt coming to town ſince that joyful event; and, in hopes to recover the good opinion of her former miſtreſs, ſhe had taken the liberty of calling at Pall Mall. Mrs. Acid, nevertheleſs, embraced the opportunity to inſult her in the manner I have mentioned; and, ſo far from feeling any compunction, ſhe told us at the end of the ſtory, that ſhe was always known to ſpeak her mind; and fancied, upon this occaſion, that ſhe had given a *tolerable hint*, as ſhe called it, to Sally Edwards.'

Here Miſs Harold finiſhed her little narrative; but the ſubject being dwelt upon while ſhe ſtaid, I ſhall conclude the preſent paper with one or two of her remarks. 'I always obſerve, Mr. Babler,' ſays ſhe, 'that thoſe people who pique themſelves particularly on the virtue of a rude ſincerity, have ſeldom any other virtue in the compoſition of their characters. A complacency of manners, though it does not always conſtitute humanity, nevertheleſs gives an embelliſhment to human nature; and often, from the very appearance of goodneſs, we are apt to fall in love with the reality. It would therefore be well, that people who are fond of ſpeaking indelicate truths to others, would reverſe ſituations a little, and only imagine what effect it would have upon their own feelings, was an indelicate truth to be mentioned to

'themselves. Whenever we change 'situations with mankind, we are most 'likely to judge with propriety; and 'we may be certain of never censuring 'the errors of our neighbours with too 'great a degree of severity, if we make 'but a candid examination into our 'own.'

## Nº LXXIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 19.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

NOtwithstanding what is generally understood by the terms *good breeding*, it is become a sort of science; and notwithstanding the generality of a man's acquaintance may be able to come into a room with a tolerable grace, and behave upon most occasions with the most perfect decorum; there are nevertheless a number of indelicacies in which many of our first pretenders to politeness imperceptibly indulge themselves, though a moment's recollection would convince the most obstinate that nothing can possibly be more disagreeable.

I dined about a week ago in the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, at the house of an old friend, with whom I make it a kind of point to pass a day once a twelvemonth. This gentleman, together with his whole family, pique themselves not a little upon their knowledge in the minutest article of breeding, and are universally esteemed a very polite set by the most critical circle of their acquaintance. Upon my entrance, I was received with all the forms of the nicest ceremony: my health was particularly enquired after by the lady of the house and her four daughters; and a tooth-ach, which I laboured under about ten months before, was lamented with a world of complaisance by them all. When the salutations of the season were over, I was permitted to take a chair, which I did by my friend, at one corner of the fire, and left the rest to the old lady and her daughters. For a full half hour we sat in a sleepiness of silent stupidity; not so much as a single question passed between us, either about the state of the nation, or the state of the theatre: on the contrary, both the ministers and the players were suffered to remain in peace; and the only instance which any of us gave of being alive, was the youngest Miss Martin, who occasionally played with a favourite cat, and once or twice threw down the poker and tongs in the prosecution of that pretty amusement.

Silence was, however, at last broke by Mrs. Martin; who, taking out a pocket handkerchief, which in several places was almost glued together by a certain quantity of snuffy saliva, sagaciously took notice, that the weather was very damp: at the same time that she made this remark, she pulled the handkerchief out of it's plaits, and held it before the fire to dry; where, to do her justice, it smoaked in such a manner as evidently supported the propriety of her observation. She had no sooner done this, than Mr. Martin, as if he understood it to be a signal, began an incessant coughing, and every other moment discharged large lumps of tough phlegm against the bars of the stove, which kept up a constant hissing like so many sausages in a frying-pan. A concert of this kind I cannot say was very much to my fancy; so that, by the time the summons came for dinner, I had compleatly lost my stomach, and was infinitely more fit for a bed than a haunch of venison.

During dinner-time, however, matters were rather aggravated than redressed; Mr. Martin helped me with the same fork that just before had been employed in picking his teeth; and his amiable lady more than once dropped some of Hardham's best Stratzburg among my gravy, though that was a favour which I by no means wished for or solicited. To encrease my satisfaction, I happen to be a great favourite with two of the young ladies, and generally sit between them when I pay a visit at their father's: in order to shew their attention to me, therefore, whenever I wanted any thing, rather than suffer me to wait an instant, they kindly helped me from their own plates; and Miss Jenny, in particular, insisted, when the footman went down stairs for bread, that I should take her slice, though it bore the sign of half a dozen teeth, no

way

way remarkable either for their whiteneſs or regularity.

Dinner being at length happily over, I flattered myſelf that I had gone through the principal fatigue of the day; though, had I once taken the trouble of reflecting on the practice of former years, I might have eaſily known I was to ſuffer ſome additional mortifications. The interval between dinner and the hour of tea was employed in a general invective againſt the plague of keepin[illegible]ts, in which Mrs. Martin gave notable proofs of a profound domeſtic underſtanding. This ſubject, I found, was perfectly agreeable to the young la[illegible]s; they remembered, with [illegible]ty, the ſaucy anſwer which the[illegible] maid Hannah had given on ſuch a time, how long Edward had ſtayed on ſuch an errand; and with what a degree of pertneſs the cook took her warning on ſuch an occaſion. To the various parts of this delightful topic, politeneſs obliged me to anſwer with a—' Very true, Madam;' and—' You are perfectly right, Miſs;' though, at the ſame time, I could have almoſt wiſhed the whole group in a horſe-pond, for teazing me with ſuch a mixture of common-place cant and ſober malevolence. Whether my friend, Mr. Martin, ſaw me uneaſy or no, I cannot anſwer, but he luckily deſired that tea might be ordered in, which gave a freſh turn to the converſation.

There is a practice at the general run of tea-tables, for the company to pour the remains of every cup into a particular baſon; and in this comfortable mixture of ſlops, the elegance of underbred delicacy always rinſes the various cups in the order they are emptied. Mrs. Martin, who values herſelf highly on the proper diſcharge of the tea-table duties, is a warm friend to this delicious cuſtom; and always takes care to clean the cup of each individual in the united ſlabberings of the whole. For my part, though I am far from being a nice man, yet I prefer my own dirt to the dirt of other people; and, on that account, endeavour to guard my cup from undergoing ſo extraordinary a purification, wherever I know this mode of rinſing is kept up. Mrs. Martin, however, was not to be eluded: under a ſuppoſition that my backwardneſs in this reſpect proceeded from a fear of giving her the leaſt trouble, ſhe inſiſted on my cup, with a good-natured peremptorineſs, and obliged me to pretend a ſudden pain in the head, to avoid the diſagreeable conſequences of her miſguided civility. Armed with this excuſe, I took my leave, not a little happy at ſo fortunate an eſcape, where I was afraid I ſhould have been obliged to paſs the whole evening.

From this little picture, Mr. Babler, your readers may perhaps be led to reflect upon the diſagreeable ſhake of a ſweaty hand; the indelicate cuſtom of picking one's noſe; and the unpardonable practice of ſtanding with our backs to the fire on a cold day, by which we entirely cut off every poſſible beam of warmth from the reſt of the company. Theſe, Sir, are errors in which the politeſt part of our people indulge themſelves, as well as the moſt underbred; and they are errors of ſo diſagreeable a nature, that I heartily wiſh, for the credit of our country, we would once reſolve to ſhake them off; as they are not only the objects of our own ridicule, but are alſo ridiculed by every ſenſible nation in Europe. I am, yours, &c.

DEMOCRITUS.

## Nº LXXIV. SATURDAY, JUNE 26.

THEODOSIA was the daughter of a gentleman in Oxfordſhire, who poſſeſſed an eſtate of ſeven hundred pounds a year. Her education was remarkably elegant, and her perſon was ſuch as procured her a crowd of admirers before ſhe was quite eighteen. Among the number who declared themſelves openly her lovers, a young baronet of great fortune made his addreſſes, and offered ſettlements ſo extremely advantageous, that old Mr. Leſtock, her father, immediately gave his concurrence; and a day was ſet apart for celebrating their nuptials with the greateſt magnificence.

It has been very judiciouſly obſerved by an able writer, that there is no time of a woman's life ſo dangerous as the interval between her confeſſion of an affection for a lover, and the day of her marriage. The conſciouſneſs of being

 tenderly

tenderly beloved emboldens an admirer to take liberties; and the man who, but the moment before, would have kneeled down with all the reſpect of the profoundeſt veneration to requeſt the favour of kiſſing her hand, will think himſelf ſufficiently warranted, when ſhe acknowledges that he has a ſhare in her heart, to dwell upon her lips for an hour, and to loll upon her boſom with the moſt intimate fullneſs of familiarity. Beſides this, the freedom of acceſs which is always allowed to a man in ſuch a ſituation, furniſhes him with numberleſs opportunities of repeating his liberties; and even if he goes to indelicate lengths, he knows he can eaſily obtain an excuſe from a fond and believing woman, who attributes his very licentiouſneſs to the extravagance of his love.

The truth of this obſervation was never more fully verified than in the unhappy ſubject of the preſent little narrative. She doated upon Sir Edward Elliſon with the moſt paſſionate fondneſs; and could ſcarcely be ſaid to exiſt but when he was in her company. Naturally ſuſceptible of the ſofteſt impreſſions, ſhe would even burſt into a flood of tears, with an exceſs of tenderneſs, when ſhe only looked at him attentively; and more than once did ſhe actually ſink under the weight of her own tranſports, when he ſqueezed her hand with any great degree of vehemence, or gave a looſe to the language of his love with more than an ordinary ſhare of fervour and extaſy. The miſguided father of the unfortunate young lady, ſo far from being continually on his guard againſt the dangerous tendency of his daughter's affection, rejoiced that he had found a huſband ſo very much to her taſte; and ſo far from ſeeing the abſolute neceſſity of never truſting her any time alone with her lover, left them frequently together after he went to bed; and permitted them to paſs whole hours in the moſt uninterrupted exchange of mutual vows and felicitations. One fatal Monday night, however, about eleven o'clock, the two lovers were by themſelves in the back-parlour, making up a little quarrel which had happened between them in the beginning of the evening. The reciprocal conceſſions which this circumſtance occaſioned, inſenſibly ſoftened the boſoms of both; and as inſenſibly led the one to offer, and the other to permit, a ſtill encroaching freedom of careſs: at ſuch a criſis, neither reaſon nor pride can preſcribe a limit to the paſſions, nor take upon them to ſay—'Thus far will I go, and no farther.' In proportion as the tide of tenderneſs ariſes, both reaſon and pride are abſorbed; and it is no wonder, when we ſuffer ſuch a ſacrifice to be made of our underſtanding, that we become equally regardleſs of our peace and reputation.

The morning after this guilty intercourſe, when Sir Edward came a little to his recollection, he was diſtracted with a variety of different opinions relative to Miſs Leſtock's behaviour; but, though he really loved her as he did his own ſoul, he at laſt concluded with a degree of meanneſs pretty common with the generality of his ſex, that her weakneſs was more the effect of a natural incontinence than the reſult of an exceſſive tenderneſs for him; and therefore he determined to break off all correſpondence with her at once, as a woman utterly unworthy the honour of being his wife.

This reſolution he had no ſooner formed than he carried into execution, by diſpatching a letter to the wretched Miſs Leſtock and her father, with the common-place aukward apologies for his behaviour, and a repeated wiſh for the happineſs of the lady, though he himſelf was taking the only ſtep which could rob her of happineſs for ever. It is as needleſs as it is difficult to paint the diſtraction which this unexpected information created in Mr. Leſtock's family. Poor Theodoſia now loved the baronet with an encreaſed affection; the guilty commerce which had paſſed between them, ſo far from diminiſhing her regard, had given a ſharper edge than ever to her love; and mingled a ſort of phrenzy with her affection, that rendered it impoſſible to live in a ſtate of ſeparation from Sir Edward Elliſon: ſuffice it, therefore, that when ſhe heard the purport of his epiſtle, ſhe fell ſenſeleſs on the floor, and was conveyed by her father and ſome of the ſervants to bed, where ſhe continued delirious for four days, inceſſantly raving on her perfidious lover, and relating the indiſcretion into which he had ſo unhappily drawn her on the preceding Monday evening. In this exigence the unhappy father wrote up to his ſon, who was a

lieutenant

lieutenant in the guards, desiring to see him immediately, as an affair had unexpectedly happened which greatly concerned both the honour and happiness of the family. On the receipt of this letter, Captain Lestock instantly set out, and reached his father's seat in a few hours after.

Captain Lestock was about Sir Edward Ellison's age, just twenty-four, but possessed of a certain elevation of sentiment to which [illegible]onet was a stranger: he was, besides, a young fellow of a temper naturally impetuous and daring; had reduced the various points of honour into an absolute system; and among the various points of polite education in which he excelled, he was universally allowed by his acquaintance to be one of the best swordsmen in this kingdom. A man of this cast, therefore, was the most improper person in the world to be consulted in an exigence where the honour of his family and the happiness of his sister were at stake. Mr. Lestock, however, was in too distracted a situation of mind to give a serious consideration to consequences: on the contrary, he rather aggravated matters than softened them; and desired his son, the instant he came down, to take a ride over to Sir Edward's, to talk to him about his barbarity to Theodosia; and to persuade him, if possible, into a performance of those engagements which formerly subsisted between him and his unfortunate daughter.

Captain Lestock scarcely heard his father out, than flying to his horse, he instantly set off for Sir Edward's, boiling with rage, and determined to call the perfidious baronet to the severest account, unless he made the most ample satisfaction to his sister and the whole family. Fraught with sentiments of this nature, he arrived at Sir Edward's house, and found him unluckily at home. At the first mention of his name, Captain Lestock was admitted; a few minutes, however, were wasted in that idle parade of an affected good-breeding, which the custom of this country has rendered absolutely necessary to be observed between the greatest enemies. Sir Edward was rejoiced to see Captain Lestock, though he was the only man existing whom he would wish to avoid; and Captain Lestock, with the most obliging solicitude, enquired after Sir Edward's health, though he could that moment have taken him by the throat, and sacrificed him to the manes of his sister's murdered reputation.

At last business was proceeded upon; and the captain expressed his utmost indignation at the treatment which Theodosia had received, and hoped the man of honour which Sir Edward had always proved himself, would immediately repair the injury he had committed, and prevent the disagreeable necessity of forcing that person to be an enemy, who was most in the world inclined to be his friend. Captain Lestock pronounced this with a tone and manner which were rather a little of the most peremptory. No body could love a sister with more tenderness than the captain; his affection, therefore, mingled with his pride, and his resentment possessed a kind of dignity, which the baronet, who was to the full as proud a man as himself, could by no means allow. The superiority which young Lestock seemed to claim upon this occasion, he therefore answered with a determined air, that, though he could not pretend to justify the part he had acted to Miss Lestock, he nevertheless could not bear to be bullied into any concessions, and would by no means do that at the request of her relations, which he did not think proper to perform at her own. An answer of this nature soon produced very desperate consequences: the captain gave Sir Edward but one alternative, an immediate marriage, or an immediate duel; the baronet accepted of the latter, and in less than three minutes was left dead on his own floor.

The news of this affair reached the unfortunate Theodosia even before the captain himself returned to his father's; but though that wretched young lady exclaimed against her perfidious lover in the most violent terms, before any measure was taken for punishing him, she was now utterly unable to bear the news of his death; the remembrance of his crime was totally absorbed in the recollection of his misfortune; the elegance of his person, the softness of his address, and the vehemence of his passion, alone rose up to her imagination, and filled her once more with tenderness and despair. In the confusion, therefore, which the whole family were in about her brother's safety, she took an

an opportunity of ſtabbing herſelf with a penknife, and died pronouncing the name of her adored Sir Edward Elliſon. The affair, however, did not terminate here: Captain Leſtock was tried for the murder of the baronet, and with much difficulty acquitted; while his unhappy father had the gout thrown into his ſtomach, in conſequence of the agitation which he ſuffered, and was carried off lamenting that he ever had a paſſionate ſon, or an infatuated daughter.

The moral which I would deduce from this little ſtory ſhall be contained in the following obſervations. The generality of people, when the reputation of a ſiſter ſuſtains an injury, always look upon themſelves as obliged to call the ſpoiler to an account who has thus infamouſly violated her honour, without recollecting that the very means which he ſeeks to redreſs her, is the ſureſt method of rendering her miſerable; and that ſhe would a thouſand times ſooner ſee a dagger plunged into the heart of the man who ſtands up in her defence, than ſee the leaſt accident whatſoever happen to the perſon who has ſo cruelly deſtroyed the tranquillity of her own. Highly ſoever as the women rail againſt a perfidious lover in the whirlwind of their fury, nevertheleſs, they experience a multitude of moments in which the dear deceiver becomes, if poſſible, more exquiſitely beloved on account of his very perfidy, and gains an additional empire over the heart of his injured miſtreſs, for the only circumſtance in nature which ſhould entitle him to her everlaſting abhorrence and contempt. For theſe reaſons, therefore, I would never adviſe a parent or brother to take a manual revenge on the man who injures his daughter or his ſiſter with her own conſent: if ſhe has been weak enough to ſacrifice her honour, ſhe will be baſe enough to ſacrifice her family; and therefore nothing can be more abſurd than to hazard a life in vindication of a woman, who all the time wiſhes the perſon may be murdered, who generouſly riſes in her behalf, and labours for her redreſs.

## Nº LXXV. SATURDAY, JULY 3.

THE following letter is the production of a young lady, and carries ſo much juſtice and good ſenſe, that we inſert it with pleaſure, and take the liberty of ſoliciting her future correſpondence.

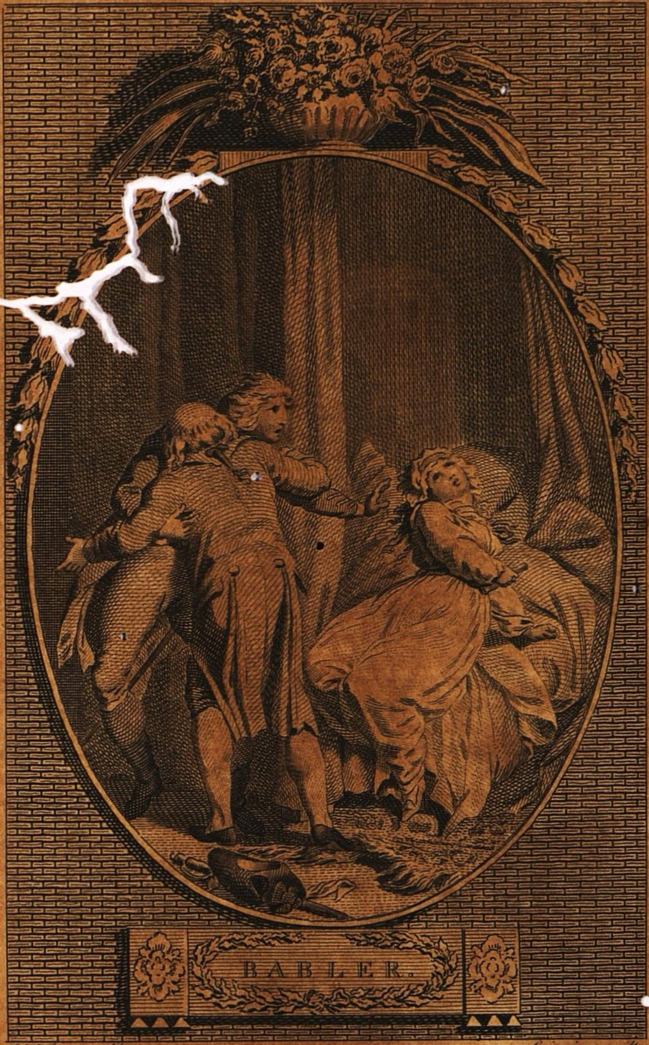
### TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I AM the daughter of a man of faſhion at the weſt end of the town, and have received as liberal an education as my ſex would admit of, through the care of the moſt indulgent parents, whoſe principal ſtudy ſeems a ſolicitude for my welfare: yet, Sir, though they have taken the utmoſt pains in the formation of my mind by precept, they ſet me ſuch unaccountable examples, that if I was not poſſeſſed of ſome little fortitude in the application of their leſſons, I might be very apt to ſhew a perfect unconcern for the moſt rigid they have hitherto endeavoured to inſtil.

My father's firſt admonition, upon my arriving at any years of diſcretion, was to warn me againſt the libertines of his ſex; and above all things, to ſet the moſt invaluable eſteem upon my reputation. Yet, Sir, the very father who gave this advice, is, to my infinite mortification, as free a liver as any of thoſe whom he adviſed me to deteſt. He has been laying ſchemes for the ſeduction of innocence, at a time he has been proving the betrayers of virtue to be the moſt infamous of men; and ſtriving to deſtroy the character of another perſon's daughter, at the very hour he appeared anxious for the ſecurity of his own.

This, Sir, is not all: my papa has often lectured me to avoid the leaſt acquaintance with any man notoriouſly attached to his glaſs, declaring, as his poſitive opinion, that none but fools or madmen ever drank to exceſs: yet, would you believe, Sir, that he himſelf frequently ſtays out whole nights at the tavern, and particularly piques himſelf upon bearing a bottle more than any of his acquaintance? He has told me to avoid a quarrelſome man as a peſt to ſociety, at the moment he himſelf was writing a challenge to a friend; and forbade me, on pain of his diſpleaſure, ever to think of a Newmarket lover,




C. F. Burney del. Grignion sculp.

Plate III. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Nov. 4. 1786.

though he never miſſes a meeting himſelf, and is known to be paſſionately fond of the turf.

My mamma, Sir, is a truly good woman, but has her inconſiſtencies too: the firſt leſſon I received from her was to be humble to all my inferiors, and to leſſen any ſeeming ſeverity in their ſtations of life, by ſhewing the utmoſt complacency in mine. Would you think, Sir, that after a document of this nature, my mamma herſelf ſhould for-ever inſiſt upon preſerving her dignity, and look upon it as a derogation if ſhe favoured any of her inferiors with any thing more than a conſtrained interrogation, or a forbidding ſort of nod? She has always adviſed me to ſhew complaiſance and condeſcenſion to the ſervants, though ſhe treats them in a very different manner herſelf; and above all things, has inſtructed me to avoid ſatirical reflections on my acquaintance, though ſhe never ſpoke of her's without ſome little acidity, ſome colour of reprehenſion, or appearance of diſlike.

Cards I am under the ſevereſt prohibition of touching, yet my mamma has ſat up whole nights, to my knowledge, at a party at whiſt; and I have been taught an averſion to all finery and parade at a time when her own table has been covered with diamonds, and the room ſcattered over with patterns of the moſt expenſive ſilks. In ſhort, Sir, I have ſcarcely received a leſſon from my mamma, which her own example has not been calculated to deſtroy; nor a document from my father, but what his conduct has turned into contempt. In my religion, as well as the leſs important concerns, I receive inſtructions which they never practiſe; and am taught to look upon an abſence from church as a moſt unpardonable error, though it is ſeven years ſince they have appeared at any place of public worſhip themſelves.

It may, perhaps, be thought ſomething extraordinary, Sir, that a daughter ſhould ſpeak of her parents in a manner ſo free as I have juſt taken the liberty of doing; but ſure it is rather more extraordinary of parents to ſupply the opportunity, and to differ ſo widely in every inſtance of their conduct from every precept of their advice. Young people, Sir, are but too apt to give into the follies of their time, without having the example of the ſage and the ſenſible to keep them in countenance; and it is no way ſurpriſing that they ſhould adopt the manners of thoſe people whom they have been taught for many years to reverence and eſteem. If my notions are honoured with your approbation, Mr. Babler, give this letter a place; and believe me to be, with much reſpect, yours,

ELEONORA.

## Nº LXXVI. SATURDAY, JULY 10.

IT is a fine obſervation of the very learned and ingenious Doctor Goldſmith, in the Vicar of Wakefield, an excellent novel, with which he has lately obliged the public, that though the poorer part of mankind may in this world ſuffer more inconveniencies than the rich, ſtill, upon their entrance into another life, the joys of hereafter will be enhanced by contraſt, in proportion to their afflictions here; and that conſequently there can be no room to ſuppoſe the leaſt partiality in Providence, ſince ſooner or later thoſe who are entitled to it's benignity are certain of meeting with an equal degree of favour from it's hand.

This reflection muſt undoubtedly be conſidered as a maſterly vindication of that exterior diſparity in the diſpenſations of Providence, at which our modern infidels ſeem to triumph with ſo unceaſing a ſatisfaction; and it muſt as undoubtedly yield a ſublime conſolation to the boſom of wretchedneſs to think, that if the opulent are bleſſed with a continual round of temporal felicity, they ſhall at leaſt experience ſome moments of ſo ſuperior a raptnre in the immediate preſence of their God, as will fully compenſate for the ſeeming ſeverity of their former ſituations.

Yet though there are a variety of calamitous circumſtances in which this reflection muſt adminiſter the moſt lively conſolation; nevertheleſs, if we make a proper enquiry into the ſtate of human nature, we ſhall find, that in general

neral the juſtice of Providence can be fully vindicated without going to this remote and delicate conſideration. It does not by any means follow, that becauſe people are contracted in their fortunes, they ſhould be wretched in their minds; nor does it by any means follow, that the greatneſs of their opulence ſhould be put up as a criterion of their content.

The principal number of thoſe hydra-headed evils, with which we perpetually torment ourſelves, are the mere effect of a ridiculous pride, or a narrow underſtanding. Actuated by one or the other of theſe unfortunate cauſes, we are buſy in creating an endleſs round of imaginary difficulties, as if the numberleſs accidents to which we are naturally expoſed, were not in themſelves abundantly ſufficient to imbitter the little ſpan of our ſublunary durations, and to daſh the ſhort-lived moments of ſatisfaction with anxiety and diſtreſs.

The generality of mankind, when they take a ſurvey of the world, are apt to eſtimate by the gradations of rank the gradations of happineſs: hence, next to a man with a coach and ſix, we think he muſt neceſſarily be the greateſt object of envy who keeps a coach and four; after this we rank a chariot and pair; and think that perſon indeed poſſeſſes but a little ſhare of felicity, who cannot afford an hour or two's excurſion in an humble hack, or take an eighteen-penny fare in an occaſional ſedan.

Look on the other ſide the ſcene, and ſee how amazingly the picture is altered. The pride of coroneted pomp continually languiſhes for the peaceful cottage of ruſtic obſcurity; and the man who has a hundred downy pillows at his command, imagines that repoſe is only to be met with in the peaſant's ſolitary ſhade. Thus all of us diſcontented with the lot which we really poſſeſs, and languiſhing for the ſtate with which we are utterly unacquainted, it is no wonder that many inconſiderate people endeavour by an act of ſuicide to throw off the ſeverity of their own yoke, and to get free from a weight of oppreſſions which is conſtantly becoming more and more inſupportable through the folly of themſelves.

Yet, as in the extenſive round of the moſt elaborate inveſtigation, we generally find the rich as diſcontented with their lot as the poor, we muſt naturally conclude, that the great Author of all things has even in this world deſigned a pretty equal degree of happineſs for his creatures, notwithſtanding the evident diſparity of their ſituations. Indeed, if we ſaw felicity in proportion to opulence, or could meaſure the real enjoyments of life by the ſtandard of rank, we might reaſonably imagine that the poor were not to receive their ſhare of the divine benignity till they were going to poſſeſs it in a glorious eternity; but when we ſee that the meaneſt labourer in the ſtreet reaps as much pleaſure over his underbred amuſement as the firſt nobleman in the kingdom can poſſibly boaſt from the politeſt entertainment; and when we ſee the firſt make as hearty a dinner on a ſingle ſhin of beef, as the latter ever enjoys at a table of fifty covers, we cannot but ſuppoſe that the common lot of mankind is nearly alike; and that all the impious accuſations which have ariſen from an imaginary partiality in Providence, are the mere reſult of an ignorant pride, or the conſequence of an affectation, no leſs deſtructive to our reputation in this world, than injurious to our felicity in the next.

Upon the whole, however, if we conſider that, let our lot in this life be ever ſo ſevere, it is ſtill infinitely better than what we are entitled to from our own deſerts; if we reflect that every bleſſing which is ſhowered upon us by the hand of Heaven, is a bleſſing which proceeds from the exceſs of it's own goodneſs, and does not ariſe from any immediate merit in us: I ſay, if we conſider theſe things with a proper degree of weight, and follow the dictates of that conviction which they muſt inſtantly ſtrike upon our minds; we ſhall ſoon ſee that, till we deſerve the favour of exiſting at all, we cannot deſerve to have our lives rendered comfortable in this probationary ſtate; and that of courſe we ought to be thankful to the Deity for ſuch inſtances of his benignity as he may think proper to diſtinguiſh us with, inſtead of blaſphemouſly murmuring that he does not honour us with more.

# N° LXXVII. SATURDAY, JULY 17.

THE term *world* is a word which every body uſes to ſignify the circle of his own acquaintance; and which the meaneſt plebeian of the community has as frequently in his mouth as the greateſt perſonage in the kingdom. The man of faſhion confines the world entirely to the elegant card-tables, and well-bred aſſemblies which he frequents; the ſoldier to the cuſtomary licentiouſneſs in which the gentlemen of the army are indulged; the lawyer to the clamour of Weſtminſter Hall; and the merchant to the moſt dextrous method of driving a bargain. Thus, in fact, the world is not the general ſtate of nature, but the narrow little circle of our own connections; and thus, inſtead of judiciouſly endeavouring to extend the ſcanty limits of our knowledge, we miſlead ourſelves into an opinion that we already know every thing; and ſink into an abſolute ignorance of the moſt eſſential points, from an abſurd ſuppoſition of being perfectly acquainted with them all.

I remember, about thirty years ago, when my old acquaintance Tom Welbank firſt came from the univerſity, that there was ſcarcely a company which he went into for ſix months, but what conſidered him as a fool or a madman. Tom lodged at an uncle's near the Hay-Market, who lived in a very genteel manner, and frequently ſaw the beſt company. This uncle, having no children himſelf, had adopted Mr. Welbank as his ſon; and conceiving from the reports which the univerſity of Oxford, gave of his nephew's erudition, a very high opinion of the young gentleman's abilities, he made a party on purpoſe to diſplay the talents of his boy, who was previouſly adviſed to exert himſelf on the occaſion. The company conſiſted of two noblemen in the miniſtry, an eminent divine, a celebrated phyſician, a dramatic writer of reputation, the late Mr. Pope, and Lady Mary Wortley Montague.

The time before dinner was paſſed in one of thoſe unmeaning random ſorts of converſation, with which people generally fill up the tedious interval to an entertainment; but after the cloth was taken away, poor Tom was ſingled out by Lady Mary, who aſked him, with the elegant intrepidity of diſtinction, if he did not think London a much finer place than Oxford. Tom replied, that if her ladyſhip meant the difference in ſize, or magnificence of building, there could be no poſſibility of a compariſon; but if ſhe confined herſelf to the fund of knowledge which was to be acquired at either of the places, the advantage lay entirely in favour of Oxford. This reply he delivered in a tone confident enough, but rather elevated with the dignity of academical declamation; however, it would have paſſed tolerably, had he not endeavoured to blaze out all at once with one of thoſe common-place eulogiums on claſſical literature, which we are ſo apt to meet with in a mere ſcholar quite raw from an univerſity. In this harangue upon the benefits of education, he ran back to all the celebrated authorities of antiquity, as if the company required any proof of that nature to ſupport the juſtice of his argument; and did not conclude without repeated quotations from the Greek and Latin writers, which he recited with an air of viſible ſatisfaction. Lady Mary could not forbear a ſmile at his earneſtneſs; and turning about to Mr. Pope—'I think, Sir,' ſays ſhe, in a half ſuppreſſed whiſper, 'Mr. Welbank is a 'pretty ſcholar, but he ſeems a little 'unacquainted with the world.' Tom, who overheard this whiſper, was about to make ſome anſwer, when Mr. Pope aſked him, if there were any new poetical geniuſes riſing at Oxford. Tom upon this ſeemed to gain new ſpirits, and mentioned Dick Townly, who had wrote an epigram on Chloe; Ned Fro'ſham, who had publiſhed an ode to Spring; and Harry Knowles, who had actually inſerted a ſmart copy of verſes, on his bedmaker's ſiſter, in one of the weekly chronicles. Mr. Pope wheeled about with a ſignificant look to Lady Mary, and returned the whiſper by ſaying—'I 'think indeed, Madam, that Mr. Welbank does not ſeem to know a great 'deal of the world.'

One of the ſtateſmen ſeeing Tom rather diſconcerted, kindly attempted to

relieve him by expressing a surprise that so many learned men, as composed the university of Oxford, should seem so generally disaffected to the government. He observed, it was strange that learning should ever lean to the side of tyranny; and hinted, that they could never fall into so gross an error, if, instead of poring perpetually over the works of the ancients, they now and then took a cursory dip into the history of England. There was a justice in this remark, which poor Tom being unable to answer, was at a considerable loss to withstand; however, thinking himself obliged to say something, he ran out in praise of all the ancient historians, and concluded with a compliment to the good sense of the university in giving them so proper a preference to the flimsy productions of the moderns. The nobleman turned away with disgust; and it was the general opinion of the table, that Tom would make a pretty fellow when he knew a little more of the world.

The deduction which I would make from the foregoing little narrative is, that people, before they think themselves acquainted with the world, should endeavour to obtain a general knowledge of men and things, instead of narrowly drawing their notions from any one profession, or any particular circle of acquaintance: they may perhaps laugh at all the world, but all the world will be sure of laughing at them; and the general ridicule of every body is much more alarming than the private derision of any one.

## Nº LXXVIII. SATURDAY, JULY 24.

NOTHING is more commonly met with in the world than an affectation of liberality where people are notoriously narrow in disposition; and where, captivated with the charms of a generous behaviour, they even force the natural littleness of their tempers into some aukward act of reluctant benevolence.

I supped last night, in consequence of a pressing invitation, at the house of a gentleman near Pall Mall, who is always endeavouring to establish a character for generosity, though there is scarcely a circumstance in which he does not manifestly betray the avaricious cast of his temper, and expose himself to the contempt of the very person upon whom he endeavours to confer an obligation.

There were eighteen of us at supper, but not the sign of a petticoat in company. Our eatables were remarkably elegant: the table was covered with every expensive rarity of the season; and I do not suppose the expence could be less, from the variety and cost of the dishes, than ten or a dozen pounds. Yet, notwithstanding so much magnificence on one side of the question, our liquor consisted of no more than two bottles of sour Port, a little jar of Welch ale, and a small bowl of brandy and water. As for lights, though the room was very spacious, we had no more than an humble pair of tallow eights to the pound, which were almost lost in a couple of superb candlesticks, which the master of the house, with an air of negligence, informed us were a great bargain, and had cost him no more than a hundred guineas at Mr. Grimstead's, the great toyshop near St. Paul's.

For my own part, there are few people who drink less claret and Burgundy than myself, or who indeed indulge themselves less in any extraordinary freedoms with the glass. When a young man, I never considered intoxication as an appendage to gentility; and now that I have advanced pretty far into the vale of years, I should look upon the smallest excess to be unpardonable. A grey-headed drunkard is to me a character no less of abhorrence than contempt: since he must indeed be the worst of all profligates, who jests with the mandates of his Maker, while he stands tottering on the very verge of eternity. Notwithstanding this declaration, I must acknowledge myself extremely displeased with the mixture of parade and parsimony which was conspicuous in our entertainment. I expected at least that matters would have been of a piece; and really wished, that a little part of the profusion which appeared at supper, had been spared to furnish a tolerable bottle of wine for the conclusion of the evening.

Next to the great art of regulating our

our appearance either at home or abroad by the ſtandard of our circumſtances, nothing is ſo ſure of maintaining us on a reſpectable footing with the world, as a conſtant uniformity in our dreſs and entertainments. Should we ſee a knight of the garter with his ribband acroſs a livery-coat, or perceive a man in an embroidered ſuit of velvet with a dirty pair of worſted ſtockings, our ridicule would be very naturally excited, and half the boys in town would probably hoot after the firſt as a fool, or the latter as a madman. In like manner thoſe who give fifty covers at an entertainment, ſhould make a proportionable figure in the choice of their wines; and thoſe for ever avoid Burgundy and Champaign, who treat with nothing more than a ſimple veal-cutlet, or an humble beef ſteak.

One of the moſt extraordinary mixtures of parſimony and parade, whom I ever remember to have known, was poor Jack Greedy: Jack made it a conſtant point to take four box-tickets in public company, for the late Mr. Ryan's benefit, declaring his high regard for the character of that worthy man, but always demanding the odd ſhilling out of the guinea. If any of his friends wanted a ſum of money, he never ſcrupled to lend it without intereſt, though at the ſame time he teazed them everlaſtingly with what it would produce in the funds. No gold did he ever give in charity, but what was conſiderably deficient in weight: and once, when he made his borough a preſent of a town clock, he charged the corporation with the carriage from London. Thus doing things continually by halves, and deſtroying, with a perpetual attention to the mereſt trifles, all the merit which he gained from the diſtribution of large ſums, he ſunk into univerſal contempt, and ſquandered away the principal part of his fortune to procure the character of a miſer.

His neighbour, honeſt Will Frankly, was a man of a quite contrary temper, though poſſeſſed of ſcarcely half his fortune; by doing things with a good grace, he obtained more applauſe from the diſpoſal of a ſhilling, than the other did from a gift of fifty pounds. There was ſomething generouſly unoſtentatious about him, that gave the ſmalleſt act of benevolence an air of dignity; and by never ſeeming to demand the admiration of his friends, he was always certain of enjoying it. To Mr. Greedy the village gave nothing more than a diſtant bow of unwilling reſpect; but to Mr. Frankly they were officiouſly forward to pull off their hats, and gazed at him till he was out of ſight, with an air of viſible ſatisfaction. Upon the whole, they were two ſtriking proofs of the wiſe man's obſervation, that he who does a good action, merely for the ſake of virtue, is always ſure of that applauſe from the world, which the oſtentatious man conſtantly loſes, by aiming to raiſe his own reputation.

## Nº LXXIX. SATURDAY, JULY 31.

THERE is a ſentiment in Mr. Coleman's comedy of the Jealous Wife with which I am not a little pleaſed, as it is no leſs an indication of a benevolent heart than a ſound underſtanding. Harriet reproaching young Oakley on account of his extraordinary attachment to the bottle; the lover, ſenſibly ſtruck with the juſtice of the reproof, exclaims, that were all ladies alike attentive to the morals of their admirers, a libertine would be an uncommon character.

Indeed, if we take but ever ſo ſlight a view of the ſexes, we ſhall find the behaviour of the one to depend ſo entirely upon the opinion of the other, that was either to ſet about a reformation, the amendment of both would be eaſily effected; and thoſe virtues would be immediately cultivated through the prevalence of faſhion, which neither the force of conviction, the dread of temporary misfortune, nor the terrors of everlaſting miſery, are now ſufficient to ſteal upon our practice, even while they engage our veneration.

As the ladies in general are more affected by the prevalence of immorality than the men, it often ſurpriſes me that they do not endeavour to look thoſe vices out of countenance among our ſex which are ſo frequently fatal to their own tranquillity. A man, through the eſtabliſh-

ment of custom, considers it as infamous to marry a prostitute, to connect himself with a drunkard, or to pay his addresses to a woman whose lips are continually fraught with indecency or execration:-though accustomed himself to the midnight excesses of the stew, yet, when he fixes for life, he enquires into the character of his mistress, and prosecutes his suit in proportion as she is eminent for her virtues. Her follies he readily laughs at, but overlooks by no means the smallest want of reputation. Whereas the lady, though bred up all her life in the strictest delicacy, expresses no repugnance whatsoever to venture with the most public betrayer of innocence, the most open enemy of mankind, and the most daring defier of his God. Nay, unless he has been in some measure remarkable for the number and blackness of his vices, she holds him in contempt; and sets him down as an absolute idiot, if he is not intimately conversant with every thing that can either lessen him as a Christian, or degrade him as a man.

What, however, is most extraordinary on these occasions, is the facility with which a father usually contracts his daughter to a libertine; as if, because custom did not involve her in the infamy of his character, his habitual propensity to vice must not necessarily endanger her happiness. For my own part, I am shocked when I see a parent less regardful of a daughter's felicity than attentive to the welfare of a son. Is there a father who would persuade his son into a marriage with a prostitute professed? I hope not. Why, then, is his daughter so relentlessly sacrificed to a libertine? Is there not as much danger for the one to be miserable with her husband, as the other to be wretched with his wife? And since the natural claim to paternal indulgence is equal between each, must it not be highly inequitable to treat the first with such an excess of unmerited partiality?

I am insensibly led into this subject from a perusal of some sermons, addressed to Young Women, which have lately made their appearance, and were yesterday put into my hands by my bookseller. Who the author is I know not, but he deserves the greatest encomiums, for the perspicuity of his stile, and the energy of his arguments; he is elegant without levity, and pious without affectation. In one of his discourses, where *female virtue* is the object of consideration, he gives so admirable a lesson to the sex, on account of this unhappy approbation with which the very best women so frequently honour a profligate lover, that I cannot but transcribe it for the benefit of my amiable readers.

'How common is it to see young 'ladies, who pass for women of reputation, admitting into their company 'in public places, and that with visible 'tokens of civility and pleasure, men, 'whom the moment before they saw 'herding with creatures of infamous 'name!—Gracious God, what a defiance to the laws of piety, prudence, 'character, decorum! what an insult, 'in effect, to every man and woman of 'virtue in the world! what a palpable 'encouragement to vice and dishonour! 'what a desperate pulling down, in 'appearance, and with their own hands, 'of the only partition that divides them 'from the most profligate of their sex! 'Between the bold and the abandoned 'woman there may still remain, notwithstanding such behaviour, a distinction in the world's eye; but we 'scruple not to declare, that religion, 'purity, delicacy, make none.

'To return from this digression, if 'it be one, we will allow it possible to 'put cases wherein no particular rules 'of discovery, no determinate modes 'of judgment, will enable a young woman, by her own unassisted skill, to 'discern the dangers that lie in her way. 'But can a young woman be justly excused, or can she fairly excuse herself, 'if, where all is at stake, she calls not 'in the joint aid of wise suspicion, 'friendly counsel, and grave experience, 'together with prayers for God's protection more than ordinarily fervent?

'But, methinks, I hear some of 'you ask, with an air of earnest curiosity—"Do not reformed rakes, then, "make the best of husbands?" I am 'sorry for the question; I am doubly 'sorry, whenever it is started by a virtuous woman. I will not wound the 'ear of modesty by drawing minutely 'the character of a rake; but give me 'leave to answer your enquiry, by asking a question or two in my turn. In 'the first place, we will suppose a man 'of this character actually reformed, so 'far as to treat the woman he marries 'with every mark of tenderness, esteem,

'fidelity;

'fidelity; and that he gives up for ever 'his old companions, at least as to any 'chosen intimacy, or preference of their 'company to her's. We grant it pos'sible; we rejoice when it happens. It 'is certainly the best atonement that can 'be made for his former conduct. But 'now let me ask you, or rather let me 'desire you to ask your own hearts, 'without any regard to the opinions of 'the world, which is most desirable 'on the score of sentiment, on the score 'of that respect which you owe to your'selves, to your friends, to your sex, 'to order, rectitude, and honour; the 'pure, unexhausted affection of a man 'who has not by intemperance and de'bauchery corrupted his principles, im'paired his constitution, enslaved him'self to appetite, submitted to share 'with the vilest and meanest of man'kind the mercenary embraces of har'lots, contributed to embolden guilt, 'to harden vice, to render the retreat 'from a life of scandal and misery more 'hopeless; who never laid snares for 'beauty, never betrayed the innocence 'that trusted him, never abandoned any 'fond creature to want and despair, 'never hurt the reputation of a woman, 'never disturbed the peace of families, 'or defied the laws of his country, or 'set at nought the prohibition of his 'God;—which, I say, is most de'sirable, the affection of such a man, 'or that of him who has probably done 'all this, who has certainly done a great 'part of it, and who has nothing now 'to offer you, but the shattered remains 'of his health, and of his heart? How 'any of you may feel on this subject, 'I cannot say. But if, judging as a 'man, I believed, what I have often 'heard, that the generality of women 'would prefer the latter, I know not 'any thing that could sink them so low 'in my esteem.

'That he who has been formerly a 'rake may after all prove a tolerable 'good husband, as the world goes, I 'have said already that I do not dispute. 'But I would ask, in the next place, is 'this commonly to be expected? Is 'there no danger that such a man will 'be tempted, by the power of long ha'bit, to return to his old ways? or that 'the insatiable love of variety, which 'he has indulged so freely, will some 'time or other lead him astray from 'the finest woman in the world? Will 'not the very idea of restraint, which 'he could never brook while single, 'make him only the more impatient of 'it when married? Will he have the 'better opinion of his wife's virtue, 'that he has conversed chiefly with wo'men who had none, and with men 'amongst whom it was a favourite sys'tem, that the sex are all alike?—But 'it is a painful topic. Let the women 'who are so connected make the best of 'their condition; and let us go on to 'something else.'

The scanty limits of my paper will not allow me to make as large an extract from this benevolent writer as I could wish. But I am the more easy on that account, as I dare say the generality of my readers, from the foregoing little specimen, will look upon his works as a very valuable addition to their libraries.

## Nº LXXX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 7.

THOUGH I have more than once, in the course of my little animadversions, endeavoured to explode the preposterous custom of toasting, yet I have within this week met a circumstance which has, if possible, encreased my aversion to the practice, and in a manner compelled me to resume the subject, however tedious the repetition may appear to some of my *bon-vivant* readers.

I dined accidentally a few days ago at a well-known coffee-house in the Strand, at the pressing request of my nephew Harry, who assured me that the company would be highly to my taste; for though the most part of them were young fellows, yet there were very few by whom they were surpassed either in politeness or understanding. This assurance, joined to the regard which I always entertain for my boy's conversation, induced me to give a very ready acquiescence; and it is no more than justice to acknowledge, that Harry had not over-rated the merit of his friends, notwithstanding the latitude of the foregoing character.

Unhappily,

Unhappily, however, juſt as we were circulating our jokes with the utmoſt good-humour, two or three gentlemen belonging to the army, who were intimately acquainted with ſome of our company, and overheard us from an adjoining room, ſent in their compliments, and begged permiſſion to join us, if we were not engaged about any particular buſineſs. This requeſt was urged in too polite a manner to be refuſed, and we accordingly ſent word how much we thought ourſelves obliged by ſo friendly a propoſition. The addition to our company ſcarcely took place, when one of the moſt manly and ſenſible characters I ever converſed with made his appearance, purſuant to a promiſe which he had given to my Harry, attended by two young gentlemen, his ſons, the eldeſt of whom did not ſeem to be quite eighteen. As the ſtranger carried a conſiderable degree of conſequence in his very looks, he was received with a ſuitable reſpect; and converſation began to circulate even with an additional ſhare of life, when our harmony was illiberally interrupted by a toaſt from one of the gentlemen in red, no leſs offenſive to good ſenſe, than repugnant to good manners. I ſtared with an equal mixture of ſurpriſe and indignation; but there was no deſcribing the ſituation of Harry's friend, or the diſtreſs of the modeſt youths who accompanied him. The father ſeemed totally abaſhed at the company into which he introduced his ſons; and the ſons, utterly unaccuſtomed to ſo licentious an example, were quite unable to hold up their heads; they ſunk with confuſion as if they had actually given an offence, inſtead of having received one; till entirely at a loſs how to recover themſelves, they ſenſibly withdrew, and left the grown gentlemen to indulge themſelves with ill-breeding and obſcenity.

Among the numberleſs abſurdities which, in this happy country, are kept up among our men of ſenſe, the cuſtom of confining vice to the ages of diſcretion is one of the moſt extraordinary. A perſon now-a-days is not allowed to be a profligate till he arrives at one and twenty; as if, in proportion to the encreaſe of his underſtanding, he was to act diametrically repugnant to the principles of decency and virtue. An uninformed ſtripling muſt by no means either preſume to ſwear or talk ſmuttily; his father will correct him ſeverely for the licentiouſneſs, and he will be looked upon with contempt or abhorrence by all his acquaintance. The father himſelf, however, may utter the moſt ſhocking blaſphemies, and ranſack the ſtews for the rudeſt obſcenities of a brutal imagination. He is old enough to know the profligacy of the practice; and is ſenſible how offenſive it is both to politeneſs and religion, to the laws of his country, and the ordinances of his God.

I have been often ſurpriſed, that in a nation which values itſelf ſo juſtly upon the character of it's good ſenſe, there ſhould be ſtill ſuch palpable remains of barbarity. What can be a greater reflection, either on our morals or our breeding, than the cuſtom of driving our wives and children out of the room immediately after dinner, and telling them we are going to begin a converſation which is utterly improper for their ears? Shall men, who pretend either to manners or to virtue, enter upon ſuch diſcourſes as are dangerous to their children, or ſhocking to their wives! Shall it be ſaid, that a child is not to be truſted with his own father, for fear of being corrupted; nor a woman permitted to enjoy a ſocial hour with her own huſband, for fear of ſome palpable affront? Yes, it muſt be ſaid--yes, it muſt be mentioned, to the everlaſting diſgrace of the civilized people of England, that they are utterly unable to paſs an evening without the moſt infamous indulgence of obſcenity and execration; and that the happineſs of their convivial entertainments is always eſtimated in proportion as they debaſe the dignity of their underſtandings, and violate the mandates of their God.

A very laudable aſſociation has been lately ſet on foot in ſeveral places of this kingdom, to raiſe the wages of our honeſt ſervants, and to aboliſh the inhoſpitable cuſtom of making our friends continually pay for their entertainment. Infinitely would it be to the honour of thoſe gentlemen who ſo generouſly exert themſelves in the cauſe of hoſpitality, if they alſo ſtood up in defence of true politeneſs and real virtue. Diſſipated as the preſent age is, a few examples would produce an univerſal reformation; and I dare be bold enough to affirm, that the purpoſes of rational feſtivity would be much better anſwered, ſhould ſuch a regulation happily take place. When men begin to throw off decency, they ſoon throw

throw off all esteem for one another; and few retain any regard for their friends, when they wantonly sacrifice every consideration for themselves: whereas by an observance of good-breeding, we should always maintain our friendships, and enjoy what Pope finely calls—

The feast of reason, and the flow of soul,

where we are now filled with disgust, or sunk into all the excesses of brutality.

## Nº LXXXI. SATURDAY, AUGUST 14.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Know few subjects more written upon, and less understood, than that of Friendship. To follow the dictates of some, this virtue, instead of being the assuager of pain, becomes the source of every inconvenience. Such speculatists, by expecting too much from friendship, dissolve the connection; and by drawing the bands too closely, at length break them. Almost all our romance and novel-writers are of this kind; they persuade us to friendship which we find impossible to sustain to the last; so that this sweetener of life, under proper regulations, is by their means rendered inaccessible or uneasy.

It is certain, the best method to cultivate this virtue, is by letting it in some measure make itself. A similitude of minds or studies, and even sometimes a diversity of pursuits, will produce all the pleasures that arise from it. The current of tenderness widens as it proceeds, and two men imperceptibly find their hearts warm with good-nature for each other, when they were at first only in pursuit of mirth or relaxation. Friendship is like a debt of honour, the moment it is talked of it loses it's real name, and assumes the more ungrateful form of obligation.

From hence we find, that those who regularly undertake to cultivate friendship, find ingratitude generally repays their endeavours. That circle of beings which dependance gathers round us, is almost ever unfriendly; they secretly wish the terms of their connection more nearly equal; and where they even have the most virtue, are prepared to reserve all their affections for their patron only in the hour of his decline. Encreasing the obligations which are laid upon such minds, only encreases their burthen; they feel themselves unable to repay the immensity of their debt, and their bankrupt hearts are taught a latent resentment at the hand that is stretched out with offers of service and relief.

Plautinus was a man who thought that every good was to be bought by riches; and as he was possessed of great wealth, and had a mind naturally formed for virtue, he resolved to gather a circle of the best men round him. Among the number of his dependants was Musidorus, with a mind just as fond of virtue, yet not less proud than his patron. His circumstances, however, were such as forced him to stoop to the good offices of his superior, and he saw himself daily among a number of others loaded with benefits and protestations of friendship. These, in the usual course of the world, he thought it prudent to accept; but while he gave his esteem, he could not give his heart. A want of affection breaks out in the most trifling instances, and Plautinus had skill enough to observe the minutest actions of the man he wished to make his friend. In these he ever found his aim disappointed; for Musidorus claimed an exchange of hearts, which Plautinus soliciting by a variety of other claims, could never think of bestowing. It may be easily supposed, that the reserve of our poor proud man was soon construed into ingratitude, and such indeed, in the common acceptation of the world, it was. Wherever Musidorus appeared, he was remarked as the *ungrateful man*; he had accepted favours, it was said, and still had the insolence to pretend to independence. The event, however, justified his conduct. Plautinus, by misplaced liberality, at length became poor; and it was then that Musidorus first thought of making a friend of him. He flew to the man of fallen fortune with an offer of all he had; wrought under his direction with assiduity; and by uniting their talents, both were at length placed in that station of life from which one of them had formerly fallen.

To

To this ſtory, taken from modern life, I ſhall add one more, taken from a Greek writer of antiquity. Two Jewiſh ſoldiers, in the times of Veſpaſian, had made many campaigns together, and a participation of danger at length bred an union of hearts. They were remarked throughout the whole army as the two friendly brothers; they felt, and fought for each other. Their friendſhip might have continued without interruption till death, had not the good fortune of the one alarmed the pride of the other, which was in his promotion to be a general under the famous John, who headed a particular party of the Jewiſh malecontents. From this moment their former love was converted into the moſt inveterate enmity. They attached themſelves to oppoſite factions, and fought each others lives in the conflict of adverſe party. In this manner they continued for more than two years, vowing mutual revenge, and animated with an unconquerable ſpirit of averſion. At length, however, that party of the Jews to which the mean ſoldier belonged joining with the Romans, it became victorious, and drove John, with all his adherents, into the temple. Hiſtory has given us more than one picture of the dreadful conflagration of that ſuperb edifice. The Roman ſoldiers were gathered round it; the whole temple was in flames, and thouſands were ſeen burning alive within it's circuit. It was in this ſituation of things that the now-ſucceſsful ſoldier ſaw his former friend upon the battlements of the higheſt tower, looking round with horror, and juſt ready to be conſumed with flames. All his former tenderneſs now therefore returned; he ſaw the man of his boſom juſt going to periſh; and unable to withſtand the impulſe, he ran ſpreading his arms, and crying out to his friend to leap down from the top, and find ſafety with him. The friend from above heard and obeyed; and caſting himſelf from the top of the tower into his fellow-ſoldier's arms, both fell a ſacrifice on the ſpot; one being cruſhed to death by the weight of his companion, and the other being daſhed to pieces by the greatneſs of his fall.

## Nº LXXXII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 21.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE generality of young women, when once they get a lover in their heads, imagine that their relations are the moſt cruel creatures in the world, unleſs they give an immediate conſent to every abſurdity of their inclinations, and beſtow them at once with a conſiderable fortune upon the ſweet fellow who has thus happily made himſelf maſter of their affections. If a parent pretends to any authority, he inſtantly, from a tender father, is looked upon as an abſolute tyrant; and pretty Miſs very dutifully wiſhes him fifty fathom under ground, that ſhe may have a handſome ſum of money to throw away upon a raſcal, whom ſhe has not poſſibly known above a month or ſix weeks.

I am, you muſt know, Mr. Babler, a miſerable woman, whom a partiality of this nature for a moſt infamous villain has plunged into the deepeſt diſtreſs. About five years ago, Sir, I lived with my father, a beneficed clergyman in the north of England, and had every reaſon to be ſatisfied that the happineſs of the venerable old gentleman's life was placed in mine, from the exceſſive tenderneſs with which he conſtantly treated me; and from the enjoyments of which he debarred himſelf, merely to lay up a fortune for my advancement in the world. I was his only child; and though my mother died while I was quite an infant, he never would alter his condition, for fear, as he kindly expreſſed it, he might place a very different ſort of woman over his poor Iſabella.

I had ſcarcely turned my twenty-firſt year, Mr. Babler, when a company of ſtrolling players came into our neighbourhood; a principal of which, being an excellent ſcholar, and maſter of a very genteel addreſs, had a letter of recommendation to my father, from a brother clergyman in the laſt town where they exhibited. My father, who was benevolence itſelf, though he did not greatly approve of ſuch a gueſt, nevertheleſs deſired him, out of compliment to his friend, to ſtay dinner; and aſſured him

Corbould del. Birrell sculp.

Plate VI.

Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Dec.r 25, 1786.

him of his beſt ſervices whenever the benefits came to be advertiſed. Mr. Villars, the comedian, thanked him in a handſome manner; and we ſoon after ſat down to table, where the deſigning hypocrite, by a behaviour the moſt ſpecious and polite, and by an unaſſuming pretence to all the virtues with which he was utterly unacquainted, ſoon got the better of my father's reſerve, and not a little ſilenced the contempt which I had always entertained for thoſe itinerant dependants on the theatre. Not to be minutely circumſtantial, ſuffice it, Mr. Babler, that Villars received an invitation, no leſs warm than general, to our houſe; and, in leſs than a week, made ſuch good uſe of my father's hoſpitality, as entirely to captivate the affections of his inexperienced daughter, and to fill her with an inſuperable averſion to the happy habitation in which for her whole life ſhe had been ſo carefully brought up.

I was too much a novice, however, in the buſineſs of amour, to keep the matter ſo perfectly concealed from the eyes of a father, who in his youth had been remarkably well received among the ladies, as I could wiſh.: he ſaw with what eagerneſs I hung upon every ſyllable that fell from Villars; and remarked, with concern, that unleſs Villars was in the houſe, I ſtudiouſly avoided his company. One Sunday afternoon, therefore, while I imagined he was at church, he unexpectedly darted from a cloſet in the very room where Villars and I were exchanging vows of everlaſting fidelity; and ordering my lover, with a look of indignation, never to come again into his preſence, deſired me immediately to retire to my room.

Though ſhame and confuſion kept me ſilent in the preſence of my father, I was, nevertheleſs, no ſooner alone, than I began to think his behaviour a very unjuſtifiable piece of barbarity: all the care and anxiety which for more than twenty years he had manifeſted for my welfare, was immediately baniſhed from my remembrance. I looked upon him as the greateſt enemy I had in the world; and, full of nothing but the idea of my adorable Villars, I determined, like the inconſiderate, the unnatural monſter I was, to quit the man who gave me being, who educated me with the niceſt circumſpection, and of whoſe worth I was perfectly convinced, to go off with a fellow who, for ought I knew, might be a highwayman, to whom I never owed an obligation, and whoſe perſon I had never ſeen till the week before, in which he ſo unfortunately brought a recommendation to my father's.

Before I had time to execute this dutiful project, however, my unhappy father came into my room; and looking at me for ſome time with an air of inexpreſſible anguiſh, at laſt burſt into a flood of tears. When he had ſomewhat recovered himſelf—'O Iſabella!' ſaid he, 'little did I think to have ſeen ſuch 'a day as this; and little did I imagine 'you would ever give me cauſe to regret 'the hour of your birth. In what part 'of my duty, tell me, child, has there 'been a deficiency, to occaſion ſo fatal a 'negligence in yours? What has your 'father done, that you wiſh to ſhake off 'every ſentiment of nature and affection, and deſire to fly from the arms 'which have cheriſhed you ſince the firſt 'moment of your exiſtence, to refuge 'with a villain, whom you have not 'known above ten or a dozen days? In 'the alienation of your affections, has 'he heſitated to break the ſacred laws of 'friendſhip and hoſpitality; or ſcrupled 'to put on the awful form of virtue, to 'proſecute the moſt infamous ends? 'While I entertained him with the 'greateſt cordiality, he was doing me 'the moſt irreparable injury; and when 'I harboured him moſt in my boſom, 'like the venomous adder, the more 'deeply he ſtung me to the heart. And 'will you, Iſabella, inſtead of revenging 'the cauſe of ſo injured, and, I hope I 'may ſay, ſo tender a parent, become 'yourſelf acceſſary to the deſtruction of 'my happineſs? Will you be guilty of a 'parricide to reward an aſſaſſin, who 'has attempted more than my life? And 'ſhall it be ſaid, that a common-place 'compliment to her beauty is of more 'conſideration to ſo ſenſible a young 'lady, than the everlaſting tranquillity 'of her father? Alas! my child, let not 'your youth and inexperience lead you 'into an irretrievable miſtake. The 'man that would be guilty of a crime 'to engage your affections, would not 'ſtop at a crime to caſt you off, when 'time and poſſeſſion had rendered you 'leſs attractive to his imagination. 'Conſider, my dear, the man who courts 'you to quit your father's houſe, is in-

'terested in his solicitations. I cannot be 'interested. He wants you to gratify his '*own* purposes; whereas I have no end 'to answer but the advancement of *your* 'felicity, and am willing to contract 'every enjoyment of my life for the sake 'of building that felicity on a permanent 'foundation. As I am determined never 'to lay a restraint upon your inclina- 'tions, weigh well the advice I have given 'you. You are now a woman by the 'laws of the land, and your person is at 'your own disposal: if, therefore, to- 'morrow morning, after having ma- 'turely considered the affair, you can 'sacrifice your doating father for this 'inhospitable villain, pack up your 'cloaths, and every thing else which be- 'longs to you; go, and favour him 'with your hand at the altar of that 'God who sees into the bottom of my 'afflictions; and do not incur the addi- 'tional disgrace of an infamous flight 'from a house in which you have been 'treated with such a continued excess of 'paternal indulgence. Remember, how- 'ever, if such should be your resolution, 'that I am no more your father. In 'humble imitation of the Deity, by 'whom I hope to be forgiven, I here of- 'fer you a chearful forgiveness for what 'is past. But if you persevere, know, 'that though my humanity may weep 'for your transgression, my justice will 'never permit me to reward it.'

My father, after this, desired me to recollect that I was far from being destitute of admirers; that three or four young gentlemen of agreeable persons, unexceptionable characters, and handsome fortunes, had for a considerable time paid their addresses; and that consequently I could not have even the ridiculous plea of being *neglected* to palliate my attachment for the object whom I had so preposterously distinguished by my choice. Saying this, he left me with an air of dejected resolution; and taking his horse, rode off a few miles to the house of an intimate acquaintance, where he lay that night, as if he was unwilling to throw the shadow of an impediment in the way of my determination.

It is no easy circumstance to describe the situation of my heart at this behaviour of my father's: he convinced my reason, but at the same time he alarmed my pride; and I absurdly imagined, that it would be a derogation from my own dignity, if I offered to make him the least concessions, after he had thus indirectly commanded me to quit his house. Presumption is always the daughter of indulgence: where children have been treated with an excess of tenderness, they most commonly think it very insolent in a parent, if he happens to tell them of any little mistake; and are wonderfully ready to expect a most punctual performance of his duty, however remiss they themselves may be in the discharge of their own. Unhappily for me, I was one of these hopeful children; accustomed to nothing but the heart-directed blandishments of paternal affection, I could not bear the accent of reproach, though conscious of it's being merited; and thought that my father should have made me a submissive apology, though it certainly would have done me the greatest credit if I had fallen at his feet, and implored his forgiveness with a torrent of tears.

While I was thus agitated between the sober remonstrances of my reason and the unnatural workings of my pride, Villars, who had waited at a little alehouse in the neighbourhood to watch the motions of our family, no sooner saw my father's back, than he boldly came up to the house, and pressed me, in the most passionate manner, to embrace that opportunity of packing up my little all, and escaping from the tyranny of a man, who made no other use of his authority than to render me perpetually miserable. —'Parents, my charming Miss Brandon,' said the artful villain, 'imagine 'they do mighty things, if they give a 'young lady a decent room, a tolerable 'gown, and treat her now and then with 'a box at the theatre: this they call an 'excess of tenderness, and think a very 'meritorious discharge of their duty. 'But see the strange inconsistency of 'their characters; though they so rea- 'dily allow her to please herself in little 'things, yet they absolutely deny her a 'will in the most material article of all, 'and permit the mere amusement of an 'hour, with no other view but to claim 'such an authority over her inclina- 'tions as may render her miserable for 'life.' These sentiments, Mr. Babler, joined to the fascinating importunity of the fellow, did my business compleatly. I set about packing up my cloaths and trinkets in an instant, and in less than two hours was entirely out of sight; glowing all the way with a revengeful

sort

ſort of ſatisfaction, to think how mortified my father muſt be when he found I had ſo chearfully taken him at his word.

As it would not be prudent for Mr. Villars to ſtay in the neighbourhood when our affair became any way public, we quitted the country with the utmoſt expedition; and by the following evening arrived at a conſiderable town, near an hundred miles off, in which a ſtrolling company was at that time performing, from whom Mr. Villars had received ſeveral very preſſing letters, requeſting him to join them, and offering him by much the moſt capital caſt of all the characters. At this place we were married the morning after our arrival; and, to my everlaſting infamy I mention it, no one reflection of what might be felt at home was once ſuffered to diſcredit the feſtival with a ſigh.

I had not, however, been many weeks married, before I found a very material alteration in the behaviour of my huſband; inſtead of the good humour and complaiſance which he formerly aſſumed, he treated me with nothing but a round of the moſt ſilent ſurlineſs, or the moſt ſarcaſtic contempt. If he talked ſometimes, it was of having thrown himſelf away; and, in proportion as our circumſtances became contracted, (for the players had but very little buſineſs, and the principal part of my wardrobe was now diſpoſed of) he was baſe enough even to reproach me with running away from my father. I now ſaw, when it was too late, the imprudence of my conduct, and would have given the world, had I been miſtreſs of it, to call back the days of my former tranquillity. I perceived clearly that Villars's ſole motive in ever addreſſing me was the conſideration of my father's opulence: he ſaw me an only child, and naturally imagined that, though the venerable old gentleman might be offended with me at firſt, he would, neverthelefs, quickly relent, and take me again to the arms of his affection as a daughter. With this view, he obliged me to ſend home letters upon letters, all expreſſing the deepeſt penitence for my fault, and painting the wretchedneſs of our ſituation in colours the moſt affecting. A poſt ſcarcely went, for ſeveral weeks, but what carried ſome petition of this nature; and, perhaps, I might have continued writing conſiderably longer, had not the following note been at laſt ſent in anſwer to my various epiſtles—

TO MRS. VILLARS, AT THE THEATRE IN SHREWSBURY.

MADAM,

WHEN I had a daughter, ſhe never ſpoke a word but what gave me pleaſure, nor mentioned a want which I did not fly to remove. You, Madam, have robbed me of that daughter; yet, after the barbarity of plunging a dagger in my boſom, are now mean enough to throw yourſelf at my feet, and to ſolicit my compaſſion for bread. In reality, I do not know whether I ſhould moſt deteſt you for the inhumanity of your conduct on the one hand, or deſpiſe you for the baſeneſs of your behaviour on the other. Is it not enough to be guilty, but you muſt try to be deſpicable? For ſhame, Madam, exert a little more ſpirit, and be uniformly culpable: talk as much of duty and affection to your huſband as you pleaſe; but let not the heavy hand of neceſſity ſqueeze you into a paltry affectation of either to a father, about whoſe heart you have twiſted a thouſand ſcorpions, and who, probably, before you receive this, may be ready for that grave which you kindly opened for him on the ſixth of Auguſt. Trouble me, I beſeech you, no more; I am familiar with your hand, and ſhall never open another letter of your writing. As you have diſpoſed of your perſon, give me leave to diſpoſe of my property; for be aſſured, no conſideration on earth ſhall tempt me to provide for a villain, or to mitigate the puniſhment which Providence has in this world pronounced againſt filial diſobedience. Could you abandon a father, and yet hope for felicity? Could you riſe up againſt the fountain of your being, and yet form an idea of content? The very ſuppoſition is a blaſphemy againſt Heaven. Make, therefore, a proper uſe of your preſent chaſtiſement, and rather rejoice at it as an happineſs, than lament it as a misfortune; ſince, had you eſcaped the indignation of Omnipotence in this world, there was but too juſt a foundation to expect an eternity of torments in the next.

HORACE BRANDON.

This letter, which my conscience convinced me was what I ought to have expected, putting an end to all our hopes, Mr. Villars no longer kept measures with me: he wanted money—money he would have; and even told me, in very plain terms, I might that very night put him in possession of fifty guineas, if I would. O, Mr. Babler, his proposal was a horrid one. A young gentleman of great fortune had, it seems, praised me to his face; and knowing, perhaps, his character, taken the liberty of—— I cannot enter into an explanation. You may judge, Sir, with what a degree of united rage and astonishment any woman must have heard such a circumstance from the husband of her heart. For my own part, though I had forfeited all pretensions to the filial character, I was yet tremblingly alive in all my other relations. I received the overture, therefore, with the indignation it merited; and Mr. Villars, finding that neither the most soothing language of hypocrisy, nor the most vehement arguments of a horse-whip, were sufficient to alter my resolution, he privately decamped in a few nights after, leaving me in a strange country, not only without a sixpence, but over head and ears in debt, and in a situation also that required the tenderest circumspection. This was too much; it brought on the pains of parturiency; and I was delivered of a boy, who, happily for himself, poor orphan, died in a few hours after his birth. For me, I languished a long time in the most deplorable circumstances; and must have inevitably perished, had it not been for the humanity of the company, who, notwithstanding their own distresses were extremely urgent, nevertheless strained a point to relieve mine; and, when my health was somewhat established, enlisted me at a full share, though I had never before appeared in any thing but Isabella in the Innocent Adultery.

In this way of life, Sir, I have ever since continued, not knowing how to better myself. Was my heart at ease, I might possibly entertain you with some very humourous little narratives. But, alas! Sir, remorse is the only companion of my bosom. My unhappy father, who did not survive his letter three days, is ever present to my remembrance; and even Villars, greatly as he is the object of abhorrence to my reason, now and then draws a tear from my tenderness, and gives me a moment of distress. He has for these four years been strolling with a company, in various parts of the American Plantations; and is lately married to a woman infinitely better calculated for his purposes than the

UNFORTUNATE ISABELLA.

## Nº LXXXIII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 28.

### TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

YOUR unfortunate correspondent, Mrs. Villars, at the conclusion of her letter, in your last paper, gave an intimation that, if her heart was any way at ease, she could amuse the public with some curious adventures of a strolling company. Now, Sir, that your readers may not be disappointed of such an entertainment, I have taken the liberty to send you the following little narrative; and shall not, through an ill-timed affectation of modesty, say you will confer a great obligation on me by giving it an immediate place.

By some such unhappy attachment as Mrs. Villars, I became, about three years ago, a member of a strolling company in the west of England; and, as my voice was tolerably good, my person not disagreeable, and my passion for the stage not a little vehement, I made a very capital figure in all the country towns of our circuit, and shone away every other night as a Juliet, a Monimia, an Eudosia, or a Statira. To be sure, it was often whimsical enough to see a heroine of my consequence in distress for a pair of stockings, an odd ruffle, or a tolerable cap. Yet the novelty of the profession, and the greatness of my applause, very readily induced me to overlook all difficulties: add to this likewise, that I possessed the invaluable society of the amiable vagabond who undid me; a circumstance of itself sufficient to compensate for every other inconvenience or misfortune.

My first appearance, Mr. Babler, was in the character of Cordelia, in King Lear. My husband performed the part of Edgar;

Edgar; and our theatre, which was little better than a large barn, was remarkably crouded against the time of representation. The universal approbation which I met with, at my very entrance, gave me spirits to go on in the part with tolerable propriety; and, had it not been for an unexpected accident or two, the piece would, in general, have been pretty well personated. The first cause of complaint was given by the lady who played the part of Goneril. It seems, this illustrious princess was violently afflicted with a weakness of her nerves; and this unfortunate disorder obliged her to make frequent application to a certain underbred potable called gin; an additional quantity of which, as the *tincture of sage* was not then in existence, she generally took, *to fortify herself against the terrors of an audience*. Unluckily, however, this medicine always disappointed Mrs. Torrington in it's operation: instead of removing her complaint, it constantly increased her infirmity, and rendered her sometimes scarcely able to utter an articulate syllable. This was the case the above evening; and nothing could be more diverting than to see a staggering princess upbraiding the intemperance of her father's followers. The barn—I beg pardon—the house, was in an absolute roar all the time of her performance; which her majesty conceiving to be rather the shout of contempt than the voice of approbation, she advanced with a haughty step to the edge of the stage, and in a language little suited to the dignity of her character, stammered out—'That it was no unusual thing for a woman to be overtaken a little; and that she warranted many of the conceited b--ch-s who were patched up in the boxes could drink double the quantity she had taken; and therefore need not turn away their faces with such an air of insolence.' Whether her efforts to make this excellent, elegant harangue, occasioned any agitation at her stomach, or whether nature of itself was determined to throw off the load with which it was opprest, is not my business to determine: but, to the everlasting stain of the drama, I am obliged to acknowledge, that her oration was not half a minute pronounced, before it was attended with such a disagreeable discharge upon the two fiddlers who composed our entire band of music, as reduced them to the necessity of making a precipitate retreat; and made it absolutely proper for two lords, a candle-snuffer, and journeyman barber, to carry off the queen by force to her own apartment.

The confusion occasioned by this unlucky accident was just beginning to be removed, when a fresh affair arose, that excited, if possible, a still stronger laugh of ridicule from the audience. Mr. Grandison, (for all our strolling players are very fond of sounding names) who performed the part of Gloster, and was reckoned one of the best studies in the company, depending too much upon the goodness of his memory, found himself at a dead stand in the most essential part of his character. Till his eyes were put out, no man could be more perfect; but this melancholy sentence had no sooner taken place, than he was obliged to beg permission to read the remainder of his character; and not easily finding this remarkable line—

Alack, I have no eyes!

there was no restraining the merriment of our auditors: a thousand jokes were incessantly cracked upon every one who appeared; so that we were fairly obliged to drop the curtain in the middle of the fourth act, and forced to spin out the evening's entertainment with the Mock Doctor, Mr. Pope's Prologue to Cato, and a double hornpipe.

There are a number of infatuated young people, Mr. Babler, who, because they see what an easy appearance the performers of the London theatres generally make, are idle enough to suppose that the very meanest stages of an itinerant actor must afford at least a tolerable maintenance. But, alas! Sir, abstracted from the continual contempts to which the profession is liable, there is not a more miserable way of getting bread in the universe. I have many nights played Calista for two-pence halfpenny; and sometimes, after exhausting my spirits perhaps as a Tragedy Queen for a whole night together, have returned home to a wretched little room in an alehouse, and there, without having a morsel for my supper, been obliged to buck up my only shift in the wash-hand bason, and to get a part of twenty lengths by heart against the next night of performance.

In all these mortifying scenes, the wretched itinerants are under a necessity of assuming a contented aspect, and putting

putting on an air of the utmoſt life, when perhaps they are abſolutely periſhing for bread. Forced, in the decay of buſineſs, to beg a little credit from chandlers-ſhops or alehouſes, they are continually ſubject to inſults from the meaneſt members of the community; and even if matters anſwer their ampleſt expectations, the deſpicable ſhifts which they muſt try to make a benefit are inſupportable to any mind which retains the leaſt trace of ſpirit or ſenſibility. As for the men, they muſt court an acquaintance with the loweſt journeyman artizan, and ſpend their time in the moſt dreadful of all employments, the amuſement of underbred ignorance and brutality. As for the women, they muſt patiently hear the pert ſolicitations of the verieſt little prentice of a country town; and ſubmit to the infamy of an imaginary proſtitution, even where they have virtue enough to avoid the reality. Let our young readers, Mr. Babler, ſeriouſly think on theſe circumſtances; and then I hope few, eſpecially of the ſofter ſex, will ever think of embracing ſo deſpicable an employment. I am, Sir, &c.

MARIA OSBALDISTON.

## Nº LXXXIV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4.

IT is a privilege with the greateſt number of thoſe people who entertain a high notion of their own wit, to rail forever at the only inſtitution upon which the happineſs of all ſociety is founded; and to pour out an inceſſant torrent of ridicule upon poor matrimony, though they owe thir own exiſtence to the eſtabliſhment of that ſacred ordinance. The motive, indeed, which the generality of our libertines aſſign for this averſion to marriage is, that the rite is a reſtraint upon all their other enjoyments; and that the moment a man devotes himſelf to one woman, that moment he is obliged, not only to alter the former tenor of his conduct, but to put up with every petulance of the lady's temper, however unreaſonable ſhe may be in her requeſts, or however arbitrary ſhe may be in the exerciſe of her authority.

For my own part, though I have hitherto continued an old batchelor, I have yet ſeen but few women who rule with an improper authority over their huſbands; nor can I entertain any high notions of the man's underſtanding, who once makes it a doubt whether or no he ſhould be able to maintain that connubial pre-eminence in his own family, which he receives from the hand of reaſon and the cuſtom of his country. If he poſſeſſes but a dawn of ſenſe, the object of his choice will be ſuch as can give him no cauſe to apprehend any turbulence of diſpoſition; and if he poſſeſſes but a dawn of ſpirit, he will always have it in his power to prevent any diſagreeable exertion of it, even in caſe he ſhould be unhappily deceived.

The pleaſanteſt argument of all, however, is the neceſſity which a married man is under of forſaking all thoſe enjoyments which, while he was a batchelor, created the principal part of his felicity. Yet, ſurely, if thoſe enjoyments are repugnant to reaſon, the ſooner he forſakes them the better, ſince it never can be too early a period to regain the paths of diſcretion and virtue; and if they are not oppoſite to the dictates of prudence, he muſt be a very puſillanimous fellow indeed who could once dream of giving them up. In fact, thoſe men are always for finding fault with the poor women, who are conſcious of imperfections in themſelves; whereas men of ſenſe, being determined to proceed on a rational plan, are conſtantly deſirous of doing juſtice to the merit of the ladies, and never prepoſterouſly ſuppoſe that they are deſtitute either of benevolence or underſtanding.

The general run of our libertines, though they are much too ſenſible and much too ſpirited to put up with any impropriety in the behaviour of a worthy woman, neverthele{s} ſubmit with the greateſt chearfulneſs imaginable to any treatment which a woman of the town thinks proper to give them, and bleſs their ſtars with a kind of rapture that they are not huſbands. This is, in plain Engliſh, they rejoice that they are not obliged by the laws of their country to bear a merited reproach from the lips of a deſerving wife, though the narrowneſs of their minds, and the baſeneſs of their ſpirits, can induce them ſo readily to put up with the moſt impudent airs

of

of a despicable strumpet, and to crouch with an infamous servility at her feet.

Sam Squander is a melancholy proof of this assertion. Sam, at the age of twenty, came into an affluent fortune, and launched into all the licentious dissipations which generally captivate young men of opulent circumstances. Fearful that his pleasures, if folly and vice may be called pleasures, would be manacled by the silken bands of wedlock, he declared himself an early enemy to marriage; and has continued to this hour, when he is near as old a fellow as myself, without even wishing to taste the sweets of a domestic felicity. Yet, though averse to an honourable connection with the sex, he could not exist without some feminine attachment; attentive, therefore, to the mere gratifications of sense, he singled out a favourite nymph from the purlieus of Drury Lane, took her publicly to his house, and has cohabited with her now above thirty years. A more ungovernable termagant probably never lived; yet Sam is quite happy he is not married. She has more than once been detected in an amour with his footman; but what of that? Sam put it up, she was not his wife. If she throws a glass at his head, which is sometimes the case, or confines him within doors for a fortnight, it is no matter, Sam is still happy, and laughs at any of his acquaintance who go home at twelve o'clock, for fear of making their wives uneasy by a longer absence from their families. One thing, indeed, makes him miserable; he has two sons by this infamous woman, of whom he is passionately fond; and the reflection that his estate must go into another line for want of a legitimate offspring, is a circumstance which renders him constantly unhappy, even in his fortunate state of batchelorship: so that, I believe, if the truth were known, Sam is secretly of opinion with me, that a good wife is the first of all the human felicities; and that the greatest of all fools is he who puts up with the numberless vices of a profligate woman, through a fear of meeting some natural imperfections in a woman of intrinsic merit and character.

## Nº LXXXV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THE ingenious Mr. Percy, in the preface to his edition of Old Ballads, declares it as his opinion, that nothing indicates the nature of the times more strongly than the composition of those songs which are in every body's mouth. Should what he advances upon this occasion be generally allowed, I am very much afraid that the present *anno Domini* would come in for a very despicable sort of a character; our ballads, for the principal part, being so flimsy in their composition, and so dangerous in their end, that very few of them are fit to be taken up by any person either of delicacy or understanding.

In the infancy of English poesy, though the versification of our bards was naturally rough and inharmonious, still the elevation of sentiment, and morality of design, which breathed through all their compositions, rendered them always passable, and frequently entertaining and instructive. But in these politer times, when every man is either a critic or a poet, sentiment and design are equally disregarded: so a little smoothness in the numbers, and a little chastity in the rhimes, are attended to, we never once trouble our heads about entertainment or instruction; but go on through thirty or forty lines of luscious insipidity with the most perfect composure, as if the lyric walk of poetry was invented merely to stupify our feelings, or to corrupt our principles.

The only subjects upon which our modern lyric poets ever think of exerting their talents, are love and wine. When the stringer-up of a love-song condescends to take the pen, he tells us that young Colin met with Chloe one May-morning in the grove, and that there he pressed her to be very naughty, and offered her a bit of ribband as a reward for submitting to his infamous solicitations; but that the good girl, not chusing to prostitute herself for such a trifle, Colin is so struck with the dignity of her virtue, that he marries her at once; and the delicate young virgin thinks it the greatest

greateſt happineſs in the world to be the wiſe of a raſcal who wanted to ruin her peace and blaſt her reputation.

If a modern ballad-writer, indeed, wants to be uncommonly arch and humourous, he goes a different way to work; he tells us, that briſk Will the ploughman, having long had a paſſion for Nell the dairy-maid, way-lays the girl as ſhe is going to milk her cows; and finding that there is no poſſibility of arguing her out of her virtue, he ſeizes that by force which ſhe refuſes to grant through favour, and very fairly raviſhes her. Nell, who all her life before had been a girl of principle, inſtead of harbouring the leaſt reſentment againſt the villain for ſo infamous an outrage, burſts into a loud fit of laughing, acquaints him that all her former pretenſions to virtue were nothing more than the reſult of affectation; and invites him, with all the confidence of habitual proſtitution, to a repetition of their guilty intercourſe. The more bare-faced the indecency, the more humourous we reckon the compoſition; and the prudent mamma teaches it to her infant daughter, and inflames the opening imagination with the earlieſt deſcription of that glowing connection of the ſexes, which in a little time is but too likely to endanger both her happineſs and her character.

The gentlemen, however, who celebrate the virtues of the grape, go ſtill farther than the profeſſed votaries of Cupid: with all the ſtupidity of the love-ſong writers, they inculcate a greater ſhare of immorality, and adviſe us no leſs to the utmoſt brutalities of intoxication, than to the utmoſt exceſſes of a libidinous ſenſuality. They teach us to think that the joys of futurity are infinitely unequal to the profligacies of the ſtew; and that we are raiſed into ſomething equal with the Deity, when we have debaſed ourſelves conſiderably lower than men.

It may perhaps be remarked on this occaſion, that the ſong is much too inconſiderable a ſpecies of poetry to poſſeſs either entertainment or inſtruction, and that if it affords our muſicians an opportunity of exerting the force of ſound, it is all that can be reaſonably expected. With the greateſt deference, however, to the opinion of ſuch accurate critics as may argue in this manner, I ſhall only obſerve, that if this ſpecies of poetry is capable of being perverted to the purpoſes of vice, it is alſo capable of being turned to the intereſts of virtue. It does not follow, becauſe a poem is ſet to muſic, that it ſhould be deſtitute of decency or ſentiment. Thoſe ſacred compoſitions which we ſing in honour of the Deity, however execrably we have ſeen them verſified, are nevertheleſs fraught with inſtruction, and it is that inſtruction only which in their preſent miſerable dreſs has rendered them any way tolerable. Of conſequence, therefore, if a little good ſenſe in our hymns does not diſgrace the importance of the ſubject, it cannot poſſibly leſſen thoſe inferior productions which we compoſe for the buſineſs of ſocial enjoyment and friendly feſtivity.

Inconſiderable as the compoſition of a ſong may ſeem upon it's firſt appearance, nevertheleſs, when we reflect that, of all the different kinds of poetry, it is what is moſt generally in our mouths, and conſequently what is moſt familiar to our recollection, a man of any ſenſe or benevolence cannot but regret to find it ſo generally proſtituted to the purpoſes of folly or vice. The elegance of an air can by no means deſtroy the profligacy of a ſcandalous ſentiment. Muſic, on the contrary, is well known to give an additional energy to language; and many a young lady, by habituating herſelf to hear the inſidious addreſſes of a deſigning lover in verſe, has been brought to countenance the moſt immediate applications of palpable proſe; and led at laſt into an eſteem of thoſe principles by a ſong, which would have ſhocked her to the laſt degree had they been firſt of all communicated in common converſation.

For theſe reaſons, therefore, I wiſh to ſee the lyric ſpecies of compoſition reſcued from contempt, eſpecially ſince it is a mortification to every gentleman of muſical abilities to be under a neceſſity of giving ſuch an embelliſhment to the productions of vice or ſtupidity, as muſt not only greatly diſguſt his own good ſenſe, but materially injure the morals of the public. I am, Sir, &c.

Crito.

## Nº LXXXVI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18.

IT has been justly observed by a very sensible writer, that there is nothing in the world which possesses more humility than pride; and nothing which induces us to make more unnecessary concessions to other people, than a desire of enhancing the importance of ourselves. This vanity leads us into a thousand absurdities, and not seldom into a number of vices: to expose it, therefore, shall be the business of the present paper; and if I can make but one reader a little ashamed of his low-minded exaltation, I shall do more essential service than if I had employed half a century in the more elegant purposes of that delicate amusement, where sober instruction is sacrificed to a prettiness of stile, and the imagination kept perpetually alive at the total expence of the understanding.

My nephew, Harry Rattle, called upon me yesterday, and told me, if I would pass the evening with him at the Cardigan Head, he did not doubt but what I should meet with a sufficient subject for a paper or two, as he was engaged in a party where there were to be some extraordinary characters. Having nothing very material on my hands, I assented to his proposal; and calling upon him about seven o'clock in a hackney-coach, we went together to the tavern, where all his friends were already assembled, and good-naturedly lamenting the want of his company.

The first person who attracted my observation was a young fellow of about thirty, dressed in regimentals, whom I found to be a captain of dragoons, and who, it seems, had raised himself from the humble station of a quarter-master to the command of a troop, merely by the bravery of his behaviour in the celebrated battle of Minden. I had not been in company many minutes before I saw this gentleman entertained the highest notions imaginable of his own importance: when he spoke, it was with an air of visible superiority; he assumed a dignity of look, and an indifference of accent, as if he conferred a prodigious favour in every syllable he uttered; and took care to lose no opportunity of informing us what a number of the first nobility he had the honour of ranking among his most intimate acquaintance. If any body differed from his opinion, he had canvassed the point with Lord Such-a-thing but the day before; and as to secrets of a political nature, no man in the kingdom knew more of the most private transactions of government. He had called upon a certain Earl in the morning, who let him into some matters of the first consequence; and dined with a noble Duke, who assured him, that there would be no change whatsoever in the ministry. In short, let the conversation turn upon what it would, he bore down all opposition with some right honourable friend of his; and thought it an unaccountable presumption in any person who did not allow a nobleman's name to have more weight than an absolute matter of fact in an argument.

When Harry and I were returning home, he gave me the captain's history in nearly the following words. 'The captain,' says he, 'though an honest and a brave man at bottom, is nevertheless such a compound of arrogance and servility, that I am often at a loss to know which he most deserves, our resentment or our contempt. Originally bred in obscurity, he conceives a sort of adoration for every man with a title; and, to be admitted into the company of a lord, is mean enough to put up with all the insolence of coronated pride, and even stoops to run on the most pitiful errands, for the satisfaction of being reckoned among the number of it's acquaintance. Yet this assiduity to oblige the great is not sufficient to preserve him even from their ridicule; they see from what trivial motive his attachment arises, and treat him with more disrespect than the lowest of their footmen, because they know his pride will not suffer him on any account to discontinue his attendance. Thus his vanity defeats it's own purposes: instead of encreasing his consequence, it renders him utterly despicable, and makes him no less a jest to his superiors, than to those who are merely on a footing with himself.

'That little man, whom you took notice of, in black,' continued Harry,

is alſo a dupe to his own vanity, but that vanity is entirely of a different ſort; he wants to paſs upon the world as a man of prodigious underſtanding; and to gain this important end, he is continually commencing an acquaintance with every author of reputation to whom he can get introduced, from a ſtrange ſuppoſition that his friends will encreaſe their eſtimation of his abilities in proportion to the intimacy of ſuch a connection. It is incredible to think with what a humility of deference he courts a man of letters on this account. He praiſes him to the ſkies in all companies, and repeats a poem with the moſt fulſome adulation, even before the face of the very author. An opinion of his own he never pretends to; nor does he once preſume to have a will in the moſt trifling tranſaction. Pinning his faith entirely on the ſleeves of his literary directors, he ſquares his religious principles by the writings of his theological friends; and regulates what concerns his health by the productions of his phyſical acquaintance. His taſte he conforms to the ſtandard which is ſet up by the profeſſors of Belles Lettres: and let that ſtandard be ever ſo abſurd, he adopts it for fear of being diſcarded for the inſolence of a diſſent. Indeed, this complaiſance often involves him in no trifling difficulties; for if two of the literati ſhould happen to diſagree, he is puzzled how to act; if he takes part with one, he is ſure of deſtroying himſelf in the eſtimation of the other, and it is no eaſy circumſtance in ſuch a caſe to conciliate the good opinion of both. I once knew,' proceeded Harry, 'when two doctors of his acquaintance were called in to attend him in a fit of the gout: each propoſed a different method of treating his caſe, and neither would ſubmit to the arguments of his competitor. In this dilemma he reſolved to comply with the preſcriptions of both; therefore, lapping up his feet in a rye poultice, according to the advice of one, he took an elixir which was recommended to him by the other, and was very near being carried off by the injudicious application of ſuch oppoſite medicines. This, however, is not all: his conſcience, like his health, is ſacrificed to the mandate of the theologiſt in company. Hence he is by turns a Proteſtant and a Diſſenter: if there happens to be more than one ſect, he is a jumble of each; and ſometimes, with a party of Freethinkers, he has no religion at all. From theſe little anecdotes,' concluded Harry, 'we may eaſily ſee that nothing is ſo ſure of rendering us contemptible, as a ridiculous vanity of ſtealing a reputation from the conſequence of others, eſpecially where a goodneſs of heart, and an attention to the ſentiments of modeſt plain ſenſe, are ſo certain of building up the nobleſt character for ourſelves.'

## Nº LXXXVII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25.

AS there are none of my readers for whoſe happineſs I am more ſolicitous than the younger part of my female purchaſers, I muſt now and then be excuſed, if I ſhould write a paper wholly for their inſtruction. Cut off from that general intercourſe with the world, which the other ſex ſo univerſally enjoy, they ſtand infinitely more in need of advice; and endued with an infinitely greater ſhare of ſenſibility, they are more likely to retain it than the men, who look upon the finer feelings as a kind of diſgrace to their ſpirit; and imagine that the leaſt regard to the ſentiments of any body elſe, is the greateſt inſult that can poſſibly be offered to their own underſtandings.

It is with no little indignation that I frequently hear the capacity of the ladies ridiculed by the wits of the other ſex; and even find that the graveſt of our modern writers look upon an enlarged education rather as a prejudice than a benefit to the moſt beautiful part of the human creation. For my own part, I can by no means ſee how cultivating the mind can be in the leaſt prejudicial to the morals; nor diſcover how a woman can be rendered more unfit for the management of a family, by acquiring an additional ſhare of knowledge and diſcretion. I readily grant, that a female pedant is of all pedants the moſt intolerable, and that nothing is ſo likely to diſturb the judgment as a ſuperficial acquaintance,

quaintance, either with the languages or the ſciences; but a progreſſive and well-grounded inſtruction in the uſeful parts of literature muſt always be productive of benefit, and muſt always give an equal encreaſe of underſtanding to either of the ſexes.

Notwithſtanding this declaration, however, there is one branch of education which even the wits themſelves think the ladies cannot attain too early, that I wiſh, with all my heart, was delayed till they arrive at years of diſcretion, and began to form notions of the world with ſome little degree of propriety. I the more readily expreſs this wiſh, becauſe the protraction of the branch I allude to can by no means be prejudicial, either to their intereſt, their morals, or their capacities. The part of education which I am here ſo deſirous of keeping a conſiderable time from the ladies, is nothing more than the knowledge of writing. I do not know that a young woman has a greater enemy in the world than an ink-ſtand; and many a parent who boaſts of the rapidity with which his daughter now improves in the art of writing, may in a year or two have a very lamentable motive for wiſhing that ſhe had never learned to write at all.

A young woman now-a-days, let her be ever ſo homely, ſcarcely reaches her fifteenth or ſixteenth year, but what ſome body takes an opportunity of pouring the faſcinating language of adulation into her ear; and it rarely happens that this ſomebody is the perſon who, if a treaty of marriage was propoſed, would meet with the approbation of her family. Naturally credulous at ſo early a period, the moſt diſtant compliment is actually ſet down as a poſitive declaration; and the man is exalted into a *firſt love*, as it is called, for behaving with little more perhaps than an ordinary ſhare of civility: the conſequence therefore generally is, that an amour enſues, and the place of perſonal interviews is ſupplied by a literary correſpondence. Miſs, while her doating relations ſuppoſe that ſhe is reading ſome pious meditation, is moſt devoutly employed in the compoſition of darts and daggers to her Strephon; and ſetting her imagination on fire with the thoughts of a huſband, when her infatuated father believes that her very motion, to uſe the language of the poet, 'bluſhes at 'itſelf;' and is certain that ſhe would ſink into the earth, if a man was to look her in the face with any extraordinary degree of ſteadineſs. A girl at ſixteen is moſt commonly as deſirous of being thought a woman, as when a woman of forty, wiſhes to be a girl of ſixteen. Attentive to nothing but the impulſe either of her paſſion or her vanity, the *dear creature* of a man probably receives half a dozen letters a day, till his vanity blazes the matter about, and her deluded parents find their lovely little innocent has very vehement deſires under all that ſpecious veil of ſimplicity; and burns for the poſſeſſion of a bed-fellow, notwithſtanding all her terrors if a man but accidentally comes into her company.

In reality, a woman of this country has very few occaſions for the art of writing, but to carry on a literary correſpondence; and this correſpondence is always begun ſo very early, and directed ſo very injudiciouſly, that it is generally unhappy in the end. A woman can have no occaſion to correſpond with a lover who meets the approbation of her family; and nothing can be more imprudent or dangerous than to correſpond with a man who does not. But, beſides the imprudence and danger of writing to young fellows, there is a diſgrace always attending ſuch a circumſtance, which I am ſurpriſed does not more frequently deter a lady from committing the indiſcretion. The men, however juſt in their engagements with one another, are moſt commonly unjuſt in their connection with the other ſex; the glory of being eſteemed by an amiable woman is too much to be concealed; a boſom friend muſt be truſted with the important ſecret; and this boſom friend has *his* confidante, with whom it muſt of courſe be depoſited; ſo that, while the unſuſpecting fair-one believes her reputation is carefully locked up in the boſom of her adorer, ſhe is the general ſubject of converſation with fifty other fellows, and is profligately jeſted with perhaps in half the taverns of the kingdom. Many a ſenſible woman, when ſhe has reached two or three and twenty, has bluſhed for her epiſtles of ſixteen; and ſickened, when ſhe has married a man of intrinſic worth, at the bare recollection of the power which ſome raſcal may poſſibly poſſeſs of expoſing the weakneſs of her earlier years. For

these reasons, therefore, I cannot but think that a hasty introduction of a girl to paper and pens, is as injudicious a measure as a parent can fall into. She can at any time get a messenger to carry a letter, when fear or shame will prevent her from applying to any person to write one. If, therefore, parents would be a little more attentive in teaching their daughters to read and spell with propriety, than anxious about the goodness of their hand-writing, they would improve their minds considerably more, and keep them from a number of temptations which often prove too powerful both for their pride and their virtue.

## N° LXXXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2.

THERE is no supposition more absurd than that which is generally made by the world in favour of learned men: a profound scholar, we imagine, must of course be a person of uncommon wisdom; and the more his head is fraught with unnecessary knowledge, the more we encrease in our veneration of his abilities. Learning, however, is a thing widely different from wisdom: a man may be deeply versed in all the mysteries of a classical erudition, and yet at the same time scarcely possess a grain of common understanding; whereas, on the contrary, he may be master of an excellent judgment without knowing a single syllable of Greek or Hebrew; and be able to manage the most intricate concern, though he has never seen so much as the eight humble parts of speech in Lilly or Whettenal. That knowledge, in fact, is most useful which is best calculated to carry us through the world with ease and reputation; and as learning itself was instituted for no other purposes, we must allow that it fails of attaining it's most salutary views where it is merely employed in the vain pursuits of a ridiculous parade, or an idle speculation.

Indeed, if there was no commerce whatsoever to be carried on between mankind, and if there was no necessity for the scholars of an academy ever to make an essay on the great stage of life in the parts of men, it might be right enough to breed our children up in a total ignorance of all worldly affairs; but when, as I have just hinted, it is with the professed intention of enabling them to appear with a tolerable grace in this important theatre that we give them an education, nothing surely can be more preposterous than to employ them entirely in those studies which render such an appearance additionally difficult, and give them rather a disgust than an inclination to put on their respective characters.

These reflections I have been insensibly led into by recollecting some anecdotes of my poor friend Dick Thornhill, of St. John's in the university of Cambridge. Dick being in possession of a very pretty fortune, used to console himself prodigiously, whenever he heard any body talk about the stocks, that none of his money was employed in the business of government. He imagined, that in proportion to the encrease of these political barometers, the burdens of the subjects were encreased; and believed, that instead of receiving so much *per cent.* for the use of his property, he actually paid so much for having it protected. In this sensible manner he still continues to go on, and laughs very heartily at the fools, as he calls them, who wantonly throw away such prodigious sums of money, merely that others may take care of those affairs which, he says, they can manage so very easily themselves.

I was standing a few days ago at the shop of a second-hand bookseller, in a populous part of this metropolis, where I often meet with an odd volume of some antiquated author, and have sometimes the pleasure of seeing my own works rusting in all the peaceable dulness of the most perfect obscurity. The bookseller, agreeable to the practice of his trade, has his various old volumes classed into different arrangements, and at the head of each the price is affixed, to avoid being pestered with the questions of occasional purchasers. My old friend Dick happening accidentally to come up—he made a full stand; and being struck with the appearance of a thick octavo which lay under the fourpenny catalogue, he asked the man if he would take a shilling for that book; to which the conscientious shopkeeper answering in

in the affirmative, he marched off with an air of visible satisfaction, and I suppose thought he had met with a very tolerable bargain.

The pleasantest story, however, which I have heard for a long time of my old friend, was one which was mentioned to me yesterday evening at the coffee house. Dick, it seems, the day before, was going through Clare Market, where accidentally struck with the sight of a nice shoulder of lamb, a joint of which he is particularly fond, he asked a good woman to whom it belonged, what was the price of it; she answered—'Six groats.'—'Six groats,' returned Dick, a little peevishly, 'do you imagine, Mistress, 'that people pick up their money in the 'streets? Six groats, indeed! At one 'word, I will give you half a crown 'for it.'—'Well, Sir,' replied the woman, 'I will not haggle with a customer.' So taking the half-crown, she tossed the lamb into a basket, and sent it to Dick's lodgings, who plumed himself not a little upon his address as a market-man. Mr. Thornhill, notwithstanding all this, is a very excellent scholar; few young fellows ever left the university with greater credit than himself. But unhappily poring over the customs of Greece and Rome, when he ought to have made some little acquaintance with the manners of his own country, he is as much a stranger to the common transactions of life, as if he had been bred up to the present moment in a wilderness, and was now let loose upon the world for the mere entertainment of society. Unable to converse with any company but those who, like himself, are elevated on the aukward stilts of a merely classical education, he despises every body who is not a proficient in the dead languages; and, in return, meets with nothing but the general aversion of the people whom he treats with this general contempt. Upon the whole, his very best friends pity his total ignorance of the world; and lament that so honest a fellow, as he is in the main, should be such a torment to himself, such a trouble to every body else, and such a useless member of society. In short, if it were possible for him to change all his learning for the experience of the barber's boy who attends him, they think he would be a considerable gainer by the bargain; though this poor fellow is the constant object of his ridicule, and one of the people whom he incessantly bandies about with significant sentences of Greek and Latin from some of his favourite authors.

## Nº LXXXIX. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9.

WALKING in the Park a few mornings ago with my nephew Harry, a gentleman of a very prepossessing appearance came up, and shaking Harry with the utmost cordiality by the hand, insisted upon his going to dine with him, with a friendly sort of peremptoriness; and, in a manner extremely polite, begged the favour of my company. As I found Harry accepted the invitation readily, I bowed my assent to it likewise; and, after taking a turn or two more, we set out for the gentleman's house, in the neigbourhood of Great George Street, and amused ourselves in his library, which was judiciously furnished, till the summons arrived for dinner, about four o'clock. We were then conducted to an elegant dining-room, where we found an excellent family dinner, and where I had the honour of being introduced to a most amiable young lady, whom I took to be the sister of our host, but who, upon enquiry, I found to be unhappily no less than his daughter.

I say unhappily no less than his daughter, because I am perfectly of opinion with the late excellent Mr. Richardson, that a gay young fellow of eight or nine and thirty is a very improper person to be the father of a young woman of eighteen or nineteen. Full of life and levity himself, he is unable to pay a proper attention to the felicity of his child; and if he chances to be a man of the town, like my nephew's friend, he treats her in a manner that must either excite her continual detestation, or destroy that purity of principle which only can lay a solid foundation for the establishment of her future happiness and reputation.

Mr. Medlicoat, the gentleman with whom we dined, piques himself, as he is so juvenile a father to so grown a young

young lady, upon behaving to her as if she was no relation whatsoever, and is never so happy as when a stranger at any public place seems to take him for one of her admirers. During the time of dinner, he enjoyed my misconception excessively, and heard me once or twice say *his sister*, without offering to rectify my mistake. This, however, I could have chearfully overlooked, had not his conversation, even before the servants, been of a nature so extremely indelicate, that there was scarce a possibility of sitting at table. An odious round of the most palpable *double entendres* was frequently offered to our attention; the nocturnal excesses of which he had been guilty the last week, were related with an air of triumph; and he even went so far as to mention the name of some celebrated courtezans with whom he had the honour of an acquaintance.

All this time the poor young lady sat in the most mortifying state of distress; cut to the very soul of her sensibility, yet unable either to retire, or to mention how greatly she was affected with this intolerable behaviour of her father. My Harry, however, took the very first opportunity of relieving her; for, the moment the cloth was removed, he begged Mr. Medlicoat would shew us the fine hunter which he had purchased a few days before from a noted dealer in Yorkshire. Mr. Medlicoat, as proud of shewing his horse as desirous of parading his daughter, immediately complied with the request; and the young lady retired with a look of complacency at Harry, which sufficiently testified how much he had obliged her, by procuring her so fortunate a release from her father's company.

Harry supping with me in the evening, I could not help expressing my wonder, that a young fellow of his good sense and delicacy should continue the least correspondence with so shameless a profligate as this Mr. Medlicoat. 'An 'indecency of conversation in any man,' says I, 'is always as sure a sign of a 'little understanding, as of a vulgar 'education; and nothing ought to give 'a generous mind more offence, than 'where we see the modesty of a virtu-'ous woman insulted by any of those 'infamous obscenities which your 'bucks, and such like despicable fel-'lows, imagine to be the criterion of 'spirit and vivacity: but when a li-'bertine is so dead to all sensibility as 'to wound the ear of his own daughter 'with a grossness of this nature, we are 'filled with horror as well as with in-'dignation, and cannot help consider-'ing him as a monster who would even 'violate her honour himself, did not a 'latent fear of the world restrain the li-'centiousness of his shocking imagina-'tion, and happily confine him to mere 'innuendoes and simple gesticulations.'

'Your observation, my dear Sir,' returned Harry, 'is perfectly just; and 'I ought to blush at ever visiting such 'a man as Mr. Medlicoat, unless I had 'some other design than merely to pos-'sess his company. But you must 'know, that this fellow, unless he is 'particularly engaged abroad, always 'makes it a rule to engage a friend or 'two to dine with him every day; and 'if by any accident he should happen to 'be disappointed, he traverses the Park, 'as he did this morning, to pick up an 'acquaintance for the credit of his table. 'By this means, it often happens that 'poor Hortensia, his daughter, is ex-'posed to the heaviest torrent of licen-'tious ribaldry; and obliged to sit out 'many a conversation which would 'appear scandalous in a Covent Garden 'tavern. Medlicoat piques himself 'upon a knowledge of the world, and 'treats every appearance of female de-'licacy as a monstrous affectation. He 'has found many fools among the 'sex, and this has given him a prepos-'terous opinion of the whole; therefore, 'to maintain his character as a know-'ing one, he uses his own daughter with 'the same disrespect that he uses every 'other woman; and thinks it adds to 'the reputation of his understanding, 'to put off all appearance of necessary 'decorum and parental partiality. It 'is for common fathers, he thinks, to 'behave with common discretion; but 'young fellows, like him, who are ac-'quainted with life, should be above 'such a weakness; as the only way, he 'thinks, to preserve the obedience of a 'daughter, is to shew your sensibility 'of her sex's imperfections. Hortensia, 'who has an amiable mind, and a fine 'understanding, is unspeakably af-'flicted at this behaviour; and always 'rejoices when I take a dinner with them, 'as I constantly invent some excuse or 'other to set her at liberty. This is 'the only reason of my acting with com-

'mon

'mon civility to Medlicoat, as he is a 'man for whom I entertain the moſt ſovereign contempt. Would you believe 'it, he keeps two women in the very 'ſame houſe with his daughter? and 'theſe worthy ladies often take it in 'their heads to find fault with Hortenſia, and even complain to him that 'ſhe will not treat them with a ſufficient 'ſhare of reſpect. Matters, however, 'if I have any penetration, cannot long 'go on in this manner, for Hortenſia 'has been ſome time courted by a very 'worthy baronet of fortune; but Medlicoat having an averſion to become 'a grandfather yet a while, has abſolutely refuſed his conſent; and, in the 'moſt illiberal terms, accuſed the young 'lady of amorous inclinations. Notwithſtanding this, they carry on a 'private correſpondence, as I have good 'grounds to believe; and perhaps the 'next moon-light night may ſee the 'young couple on their journey to Edinburgh. May this, I ſay, be the caſe; 'and may every father who follows the 'ſteps of Medlicoat be rendered equally 'contemptible, and become equally diſappointed in his expectations.'

## Nº XC. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THOUGH there are few qualifications which afford us ſo general a ſatisfaction as an agreeable voice; yet there are few things which give us ſo general a diſguſt as the univerſal propenſity which every body has to ſing, without recollecting the judgment of their company, or conſidering the ſcope of their own abilities. This obſervation, Mr. Babler, I had but too much reaſon to make yeſterday evening, at a meeting of ſome friends, who had particularly aſſembled on purpoſe to paſs three or four hours with a degree of more than ordinary pleaſure and feſtivity. Our party, Sir, was carefully ſelected; and there was not a ſingle man in the room but could hold a toaſt, give his ſentiment, or ſit up all night with a country candidate at a conteſted election.

The Royal Family had ſcarcely gone round, Mr. Babler, when Dick Thompſon was called upon for a ſong, who accordingly prepared to oblige us; and in an inſtant ſtruck up the celebrated air in Arne's opera of Artaxerxes—

Water parted from the Sea.

This, however, he executed in a manner ſo very execrable, that it was with the utmoſt difficulty the whole company could keep from laughing in his face: we all of us ſat upon thorns till he had done; and either picked our noſes, or bit our nails, till the complimentary bow at the concluſion happily releaſed us from ſo uneaſy a ſituation. Nevertheleſs, every body honoured him with a plaudit; and Dick really aſſumed as much dignity in his look as if he had performed to a miracle.

The next perſon ſingled out was Kitt Turner; a young fellow with a voice quite of a different caſt from Mr. Thompſon's, and well enough adapted for the ſofter ſpecies of ſongs, where there is no extraordinary number of ſhakes or diviſions. Kitt unhappily, regardleſs of the walk in which he could actually make a tolerable figure, attempted *the School of Anacreon*; and ſtrained his little lungs to ſo unconſcionable a degree, as rendered him utterly unable to give us any thing elſe the remainder of the evening.

When Kitt had concluded, he called upon Tom Nelſon; who offered us *the Soldier and the Sailor*, provided we ſuffered him to accompany this delightful compoſition with the muſic of a pewter diſh. As Tom's principal motive was to entertain, nobody could be rude enough to diſſent from his propoſal, and a pewter diſh was therefore ordered up ſtairs, which Mr. Nelſon kept ſpinning on the table all the time of his ſong, occaſionally leſſening or increaſing the velocity of it's motion, according as the different movements of the tune rendered ſuch a circumſtance neceſſary.

Fired with the approbation which was beſtowed upon the pewter diſh, the moment it came to Will Webly's turn, he chalked the back of his hand in two or three places, and rubbing it in two or three other places with a piece of burnt cork, he got up, and placing his hand againſt

against a particular part of the room, roared out, *An old Woman cloathed in Grey*, working his fingers in ſuch a manner as to raiſe ſome faint idea of an antiquated face. This was conſidered as a high ſtroke of humour, and produced no leſs than a ſolo on the tongs, a concerto on a pair of bellows, and Handel's water-piece on the ſalt-box. The various performances, Mr. Babler, laſted a conſiderable time, and every body ſeemed to be pleaſed; though, in fact, it was no way difficult to ſee that every body was ſecretly diſſatiſfied and diſappointed. For my own part, I was never more uneaſy in a company ſince I knew what a company was, and took an opportunity of ſtealing away about two o'clock in the morning.

It is in reality not a little odd, Mr. Babler, that people, who are acquainted with their own deficiencies in point of voice, do not, when they are called upon among their friends, give ſuch a ſong as is moſt naturally ſuited to their compaſs. What buſineſs has a fellow, who can ſcarcely get through a plain derry-down tune, to think of meddling with a difficult Italian air? Or what neceſſity is there for a man, who never ſaw a gamut in his life, to aim at executing a piece of muſic which actually calls for a performer of the moſt capital abilities?

The generality of people, when they hear a ſong in our theatres which happens to hit their fancy, are conſtantly endeavouring to retail it among their acquaintance, without ever conſidering that, notwithſtanding all the advantages of an exquiſite voice, and a conſummate muſical knowledge, the performer who ſings it may ſcarcely be able to go through it with a ſufficient ſhare of delicacy or judgment. A man, however, who would eſcape ridicule, ought to conſider that thoſe ſongs may be, to the laſt degree, intolerable from him, which in Vernon would almoſt drag the theatre down with acclamations; and, next to the merit of making himſelf pleaſing, he ſhould remember, that the greateſt proof of good ſenſe is not to render himſelf diſagreeable: on which account, therefore, thoſe who have but plain voices, ought to ſtick to plain ſongs; ſince, inſtead of gaining any reputation by an attempt to ſoar beyond their proper powers, they will do nothing more than offend the ears of every company they go into, and draw an everlaſting ſmile of deriſion upon themſelves.

It would alſo be judicious in thoſe ladies or gentlemen, who occaſionally oblige their friends with a ſong, if, as well as taking care not to meddle with any difficult pieces of muſic, they likewiſe took care never to meddle with a ſong where they were not perfectly acquainted with the words. How often have I heard a delicious morſel of poetry moſt barbarouſly mangled, through the inattention of a negligent ſinger; and every grammatical inſtitute inhumanly butchered, through the want of a little recollection! Sorry am I to add, that I have moſt generally obſerved theſe imperfections among the ladies; and have frequently conceived a diſguſt to a very paſſable face, merely becauſe the poſſeſſor was ſo totally unacquainted with Engliſh.

At ſome other opportunity, Mr. Babbler, perhaps I may again trouble you with a ſcrawl: for the preſent, I believe, I have given you enough; and therefore ſhall only add, that I am, &c.

CRITO.

## Nº XCI. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 23.

As happineſs is the purſuit of every body, it is not a little ſurpriſing that ſo few of us arrive at this univerſal goal of human deſire; and ſtill more ſurpriſing, that when we ſee the various quickſands upon which the expectations of others have been ſhipwrecked in ſteering to this favourite point, we are not a little more cautious in the direction of our own courſe, eſpecially as ſomething more than a temporary felicity reſts upon our attention, and the tranſports of a future life immediately depend upon the rectitude of our conduct in this.

The principal reaſon why the generality of the world are diſappointed in their ſearch after happineſs, ſeems to me to be that ſtrange infatuation of placing our

our highest felicity in objects which are either weak or vicious in themselves, and which, consequently, our reason, upon a sober consideration, must either despise or detest. A man, whose utmost wishes are centered in the luxuries of a fashionable table, must be miserable the moment he is incapable of emptying another plate: he who has no other comfort in life than his bottle, must be robbed of his *summum bonum*, the instant he is stretched upon the floor; and he whose desires are absorbed in still greater sensualities, must be equally unfortunate, the moment those desires have been indulged. In fact, every pursuit of this nature is rendered lifeless and insipid by it's very gratification, till continual repetitions so deaden the appetite, (to say not a syllable of consequences) that experience makes us exclaim with the wisest fool that ever existed—

'All is vanity under the sun.'

Were we, however, to make reason the guide of our actions, instead of being eternally directed by inclination, our enjoyments would always be certain; and recollection would afford us the most perfect satisfaction, instead of filling us incessantly with mortification and disgust; for, in reality, if we think but ever so hastily on the affair, we shall find that no object can promise us the smallest glimmer of real felicity which is repugnant to the sentiments of virtue. It is from the rectitude of our conduct only that we are to look for any happiness at all; and surely, when we give an unbounded loose to every depravity of inclination, it is a degree of absolute madness to expect the self-approving testimony of our own conscience to the very actions which that conscience cannot but highly discountenance and condemn.

The glittering noise and pompous bustle of the world, may for a time, perhaps, lull the sentiments of reason, or cry Hush to the pleadings of conscience, but can never entirely subdue either. In the moments of retirement, the most hardened of us all are dragged up in turn before the bar of our own minds; and the deity which presides there pronounces a just, though a severe, sentence on every breach of morality and virtue. Callous as we endeavour to make ourselves, that sentence screws itself in the memory; clouds the eye amidst all the splendour of the drawing-room; and harrows up the very soul, in the warmest sun-shine of a court. Where is the man who can say, he has never acknowledged the omnipotence of conscience? Where is he who can affirm he has not, in the strictest sense of the expression, been condemned by the deity of his own bosom, and doomed to a temporary perdition in his mind? Stand out, ye fashionable deniers of another existence; come forth, ye daring blasphemers of your God—from the irresistible something, which acquits or condemns during this life in your breasts, learn to believe that there is a sovereign Disposer of all things in the next, who will decide with an equal severity and justice; and that the power of the divinity which you experience so frequently below, is nothing but a faint resemblance of that authority which, at the dreadful day of account, you must meet with above.

I am very frequently amazed, (abstracted from every consideration of future happiness) that the mere dictates of self-concern for the felicity of the present, does not generally induce us to follow such pursuits as are certain to give us a real satisfaction while they engage us; and sure in their consequences of establishing, not only an increase of honest reputation, but a source of inconceivable content. Was the libertine, instead of squandering thousands to destroy some unsuspecting innocent, to employ a fiftieth part of the sum in her protection—what a foundation would he lay for arriving at that goal, which his very greediness after happiness destroys in the contrary course! Was the miser, instead of hoarding up useless millions, to expend a little of his wealth in wiping away the sorrows from affliction and distress, the action would be it's own reward; and he would own, that if he went to the proper market, happiness was to be purchased at a very reasonable price. In short, if mankind would consider that virtue and vice create their own heaven and hell even on this side the grave, the principal part of us would endeavour to act in such a manner as would enable them to look with confidence beyond it, and experience in this world some tolerable idea of that felicity which is prepared to await the righteous in the next.

## N° XCII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30.

I Have often remarked, that one half of the pleaſures ſo eagerly proſecuted by the generality of mankind, if changed in their appellations, and ranked under the denomination of labour, would be ſhunned with as much aſſiduity as they are now followed, and rendered every whit as diſguſtful to the fancy, as they are now flattering and agreeable. Through ſome unaccountable infatuation, we are raviſhed, in the literary ſenſe of the expreſſion, with the whiſtling of a name; and infinitely fatigue ourſelves more in the bare purſuit of our ſeveral amuſements, than in the cloſeſt attention to the duties of our reſpective vocations, though theſe evocations are the only means which we have of raiſing a neceſſary proviſion for our families.

The truth of this poſition was never more evidently aſcertained than in the character of poor Bob Beetle. Bob is engaged in a very extenſive way of buſineſs; and is at once the moſt lazy and the moſt induſtrious fellow alive: he is fatigued to death if he writes a few lines to a correſpondent; but he will ride after a pack of dogs for a dozen hours together, and call it glorious ſport, when he has ventured his neck over a ſcore or two of gates, and come home as dirty as a ducked pick-pocket from a forty miles chace in the middle of winter. When he is in town, he complains of it as a prodigious hardſhip if he riſes at ten o'clock in the morning, though in the country he makes no ſcruple whatſoever to get up at three or four to drag a fiſh pond; and will ſcarcely walk a ſtreet's length to receive a hundred pounds in the way of his buſineſs, though he would trudge eight or ten miles with the greateſt ſatisfaction after a brace of partridges. I met Bob a few days ago in the city, and ſtopping him on the privilege of an old acquaintance, demanded the reaſon of his ſeeming out of temper—'Seeming!' repeated he, 'Mr. Babler, it is more than ſeeming; 'I am half inclined to hang myſelf. 'Here, in ſuch a roaſting day as this, 'muſt I trudge to Change, and broil 'for two whole hours under the intenſe 'heat of a perpendicular ſun. Damn 'it, Sir, I lead the life of a galley-ſlave; 'and it is better not to live at all, than 'be liable to ſuch continual anxieties.' I was ill-natured enough to ſmile at his diſtreſs; but giving him a cordial ſhake by the hand, I wiſhed him a good morning, and ſo we parted. Next day, about twelve o'clock, going to dine at a relation's near Hammerſmith, who ſhould I ſee, ſtripped and playing at cricket in a field near Kenſington, but Bob? Though the weather was rather warmer than when I met him the preceding day, he was engaged in that violent exerciſe with all the appearance of a moſt exquiſite ſatisfaction, and ſcoured after the ball with as much agility as he could poſſibly uſe to get himſelf into a heat on a froſty morning.

If we take but ever ſo ſlight a ſurvey of mankind, we ſhall find that moſt people are actually pretty much in the ſame manner with my friend Bob Beetle. Looking upon that as an inſupportable toil which is moſt conducive to their intereſt, they abſolutely find a pleaſure in fatigue, and run into downright labour, in hopes of enjoying a little recreation. I would by no means be underſtood as an arguer againſt a moderate ſhare of manly exerciſe or rational amuſement: on the contrary, I look upon ſuch relaxations to be eſſentially neceſſary, both becauſe they add conſiderably to our health, and give us a freſh inclination of returning to the buſineſs of our various employments. What I am offended at is, to ſee men of excellent underſtandings, in total oppoſition to the dictates of their good ſenſe, applying themſelves wholly to the proſecution of their pleaſures, and creating a number of imaginary difficulties, to embitter every moment which they ſet apart for the management of their moſt neceſſary employments.

Were temporal concerns, however, the only ones which we ſacrifice to our idleſt, nay, to our moſt culpable amuſements, ſomething ſtill might be ſaid in our defence; but our happineſs hereafter, as well as our intereſts here, are obliged to give way to the meaneſt diſſipations; and a fox-chace or a cricket-ball, a hunting match or a dice-box, are not only able to ſtifle every impulſe of

of regard which we ought to entertain for our families, but every ſentiment of adoration which we ought to entertain for our God. The duties of religion, like our domeſtic concerns, are utterly neglected; and even the awful buſineſs of eternity is thrown aſide for a contemptible game at whiſt, or a deſpicable pack of hounds.

The parallel between the neglect of our temporal and ſpiritual concerns will be found conſiderably ſtronger, when we recollect, that where unavoidable neceſſity compels a momentary attention to either, we enter upon them with an equal degree of reluctance and ill-will. But in the conſequence, however, there is the wideſt difference: our diſinclination does not often interrupt the buſineſs of our callings, while we continue in oppoſition to the natural bent of our tempers to carry it on. Many a man, though he hates his profeſſion, neverthelefs, by ſubduing his antipathy to it, and managing his affairs with diſcretion, makes a good fortune; but let us be ever ſo diligent in the diſcharge of our religious obligations, yet, if our hearts are not actually engaged in the ſervice of our Creator, all our perſonal attendance on his worſhip will be ſo far from availing us, that it will rather encreaſe the enormity of our guilt, and expoſe us more inevitably to the thunders of his hand. Reluctance is an aggravation of our crime; and we become leſs and leſs excuſable, the more we appear in his temple, unleſs we approach it with the moſt exalted fervency of inclination. Let us be careful, therefore, whenever we ſteal an hour from the elyſium of our amuſements, and condeſcend to enter a church, that we do not ſuffer ſo precious a part of our time to be loſt. Let us take the greateſt pains we are able to prevent that hour from being an evidence againſt us at the dreadful day of judgment; and conſider, in the language of the poet—

> That, unleſs we deſiſt from our crimes,
> 'Tis blaſphemy ſurely to pray.

## N° XCIII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 6.

CONVERSING yeſterday with an old acquaintance on the vanity of human wiſhes, we fell inſenſibly into a long diſcourſe about the abſurdities of mankind, even in their beſt actions; and particularly dwelt upon the inſolence of their very devotion, when, though they affect to ſubmit themſelves entirely to the reſignation of Providence, they nevertheleſs preſume to point out immediate objects for the exerciſe of the Divine Benignity, without once recollecting that the nature of their requeſt may be totally oppoſite both to the greatneſs of it's wiſdom, and the juſtice of it's laws.

The ſubject of converſation poſſeſſed me ſo very much upon my going to bed, that it continued to employ my imagination; and I dreamed how Jupiter took me up to the ſkies, as he was ſaid to have formerly done by Menippus the philoſopher, in order that I might be convinced the accuſations ſo generally brought againſt the equity of Providence were totally without foundation; and that the great Author of the univerſe, notwithſtanding the impious murmurs of his creatures, was perfectly juſt and conſiſtent in the minuteſt of his decrees.

Having taken my ſtation, as I fancied, at the feet of the deity, the cryſtal gates of the celeſtial region were thrown wide open; and by a particular order of Jupiter, the ſofteſt whiſper addreſſed to him from earth was ſo diſtinctly heard, that during the continuance of the various ſupplications I never miſſed a ſingle ſyllable.

The firſt who offered up his prayers to Olympus, was a man who had been ruined by being a ſecurity in a large ſum of money for a very intimate friend. 'This,' ſays Jupiter, turning to me, 'is a fellow of unqueſtionable worth 'and integrity; through the whole 'courſe of his life he has paid ſo inflex'ible an attention to the dictates of vir'tue, that I do not believe I have any 'thing to charge him with beſides a 'human infirmity. He thinks it hard, 'therefore, that I ſhould ſuffer him to 'be plunged into diſtreſs, though this 'diſtreſs is nothing more than the na'tural conſequence of his own indiſcre'tion; for, inſtead of building his eſteem 'upon the honeſty of the man by whoſe 'means he is thus unhappily ſtripped of 'his all, he founded his regard entirely

'upon the length of their acquaintance; 'and assisted him, not because he was 'a person of probity and honour, but 'because he was a person with whom 'he generally cracked a bottle in an 'evening, and took a sociable pipe. 'On this account he is justly punished 'for his folly; and though I intend to 'reward his virtues very amply in this 'world, yet I must permit him to be 'chastised below, that other worthy 'men may take warning by his ex-'ample, and learn to shower their fa-'vours upon those only whom they 'know to be truly deserving.'

The next person who offered up his petition was a merchant in the city, who prayed devoutly for a fair wind for a ship which he had richly laden in the river, and intended for a very valuable market on the coast of Africa. 'Now 'here,' resumed Jupiter, 'is another 'very honest fellow, who will think 'himself particularly aggrieved if I de-'cline to comply with his request; and 'yet, if I was to grant it, a thousand 'others would inevitably be ruined, 'who are bound upon voyages that re-'quire quite a contrary wind. Your 'people of virtue imagine that they 'should in the minutest circumstance be 'the particular care of Providence, and 'absurdly fancy that the attention of a 'Being, who has the whole universe to 'govern and support, should be entire-'ly engrossed by themselves. These 'people must, however, be informed, 'that I am the God of an extensive 'world, and not the immediate patron 'of any one man. Of course, there-'fore, I shall never invert the order of 'things to oblige a private person, 'though that person should be the very 'best of all my votaries; more particu-'larly too, when, let his merits be what 'they will, my favour shall so incredi-'bly exceed them in the end.'

After the departure of the merchant, I thought a whole kingdom came at once, and begged of Jupiter to destroy a neighbouring nation with whom they happened to be at war. 'Here are pre-'cious fellows for you!' cried Jupiter; 'and so I must sacrifice a country of 'ten or twelve millions, merely because 'their conscientious votaries think pro-'per to make the request; that is, in 'plain English, I must be their bully, 'and arm myself in passions, that 'would disgrace the meanest of them-'selves, for the mighty honour of exe-'cuting the purposes of their revenge.' Jupiter, upon this, turned his head aside with indignation, and bid me observe another body of people, rather larger than the former, who were singing hymns to his praise, and invoking his favour with all the energy of the most solemn adoration. 'This,' says he, 'is the nation with whom my late set 'of worthies are at war; and you hear 'they are just praying in the same man-'ner that I would be graciously pleased 'to cut the throats of all their enemies. 'Now, which of these must I oblige? 'Their pretensions to my regard are 'alike insignificant; and they are quar-'relling for a tract of country in Ame-'rica, to which neither of them have 'the smallest right. To punish, there-'fore, both their injustice to the poor 'Americans, and their insolence in 'thinking to make me an abettor of 'their infamous contention, I shall 'leave them entirely to themselves, and 'make each by that means the scourge 'of the other's crimes.' Jupiter delivered these last words in a tone so tremendous, that I awoke with affright; but recollecting the various circumstances of my dream, I thought it would make no indifferent paper, as it taught so absolute a resignation to the awful dispensations of God.

## N° XCIV. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13.

HYPOCRISY, for the honour of the present age, is a crime so very little practised, that people are not at the trouble of concealing their follies or their vices, but generously run into the most palpable mistakes, or the most culpable errors, in the full face of day; and even expect that we should look upon this exalted disregard of shame as a mark of the highest candour and sincerity.

For my own part, however, I should be glad if the generality of mankind were less ingenuous in this respect, since so open a commission of our faults must necessarily raise vice into a sort of reputation,

tation, and eſtabliſh an example to the laſt degree prejudicial to poſterity. Hypocriſy, therefore, ſo far as it regarded a concealment of our faults, I ſhould look upon as a ſort of negative virtue, becauſe, though it did not extenuate our own errors, it nevertheleſs prevented us from debauching the principles of other people.

The great misfortune of the preſent age is, that the univerſal force of example has rendered a number of the moſt atrocious crimes abſolutely faſhionable: formerly it was looked upon as infamous to the laſt degree, if a man alienated the affection of an acquaintance's wife, or plunged a dagger into the boſom of a friend. Now-a-days, it is impoſſible for a young fellow to be allowed a dawn of ſpirit, unleſs he has deſtroyed his woman, or killed his man, and trampled upon every inſtitute which ought to be ſacred to ſociety. Nay, to ſuch a height are matters at preſent carried, that we often boaſt of our crimes as if they were ſo many virtues; and recount, with an air of the moſt exquiſite ſatisfaction, how many times we have been drunk within the courſe of the week, how many ſtrumpets we have viſited, or how many times we have endangered our lives in the midnight diſputes of a common brothel. If any body is ſenſible enough to decline accompanying us on theſe pretty expeditions, we ſet him down as a ſpiritleſs, ignorant milkſop, equally deſtitute of ambition and underſtanding. What is more, in proportion as he manifeſts a repugnance to join in our extravagances, in proportion we turn him into ridicule, and load him with the moſt inſuperable contempt, when we ought to honour him with the greateſt ſhare of our admiration.

But what in the courſe of general obſervation aſtoniſhes me moſt, is, that a man ſhall claim a right to be profligate, in proportion as we allow him to be ſenſible; and think himſelf entitled to be vicious, according to the eſtimate which we make of his underſtanding. Nothing is more common, now-a-days, than to praiſe our intimate friends in ſomething like the following manner. 'Why, to be ſure, Tom or Jack Such-'a-one is a very wicked dog, but then 'he's no fool.' Thus that very good ſenſe which ſhould be conſidered as an aggravation of his conduct, is looked upon as an extenuation at leaſt; and we think him entirely juſtified in the moſt criminal undertakings, in proportion as he is really without the ſhadow of excuſe.

Some people, indeed, who affect to poſſeſs an extraordinary ſhare of principle, propoſe a limitation to their vices, and make a ſort of agreement with their own conſciences not to be wicked above ſuch a certain number of years. The period which they fix for the date of their reformation, is generally the day of marriage; without ever reflecting on the poſſibility of never living to this period, they go on in an uninterrupted courſe of licentiouſneſs, and imagine they may with propriety diſturb the peace of every other perſon's family till they have actually got a family of their own: nor does a parent or guardian once ſuppoſe any of theſe worthy gentlemen an improper match for their daughters or their wards, on account of their profeſſed profligacy; on the contrary, it is a received opinion, that a reformed rake makes the beſt huſband; and that he is the propereſt companion in life for a woman of virtue and honour, who never before had an acquaintance with a woman of virtue or honour at all.

From theſe conſiderations on the prodigious encouragement which vice ſo inceſſantly receives from the force of example, I am led to be an advocate for hypocriſy; and induced to wiſh, that thoſe who are too wiſe or too ſpirited to be reaſoned out of their errors, would at leaſt be humane enough to practiſe them with ſome ſhare of caution, that they may not ſeduce others from the ſentiments of virtue, nor be inſtrumental in the deſtruction of any body but themſelves.

I am very ſenſible how extremely unfaſhionable it is for a writer to preſs any conſiderations of a future ſtate upon the mind of an elegant reader. Now-a-days it is indelicate to talk of eternity with any kind of weight, and repugnant to every ſentiment of politeneſs for a man to ſpeak with the ſmalleſt veneration of his God. Yet, ſurely, as long as we are ſenſible upon how precarious a tenure our exiſtence depends, we ſhould now and then think that a day of account will come; and where we are ſo certain of our mortality, we ought to recollect that we are ſome time to die. It was an excellent remark of Julius

Cæſar's,

Cæsar's, the morning of his assassination, when Antony asked him why he talked so much on death—That what might each moment happen, should employ every moment of a wise man's thoughts. Certain indeed it is, that a frequent consideration of this awful period is the best means of enabling us to sustain it; and as certain it is, that those are only fit to live who are always in a condition to die.

## N° XCV. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

GRATITUDE is a quality of so bewitching a nature, that we generally look upon it as a complication of all the virtues, and suppose that no man can be destitute of any other who is happily in possession of this; yet, amiable soever as it is universally considered, perhaps there is no excellence in the catalogue so little studied, or for which in general we entertain so unaccountable a contempt.

In former ages, an attention to the dictates of gratitude was reckoned an indispensable part of our duty; and nothing was looked upon in a more detestable light than an insensibility of favours, or an unworthy return where we had been in the least obliged: one particular species of gratitude was held inviolably sacred; and the Romans were so religiously punctual in the performance of it, that they put the offender's life in the power of his benefactor wherever they saw it transgressed.

The instance where the Romans punished the want of gratitude with such severity, was the breach or neglect of that tenderness and affection which was indispensably due to a father from a son. That sensible people judiciously considered, that if a man could behave with ingratitude to a parent that had endued him with no less a blessing than his very existence, he must be dead to every sense of obligations from any other quarter; and fancied that a person capable of bursting through the most sacred ordinances of nature, was capable of bursting through the most sacred of society too. From this principle, in the early ages of that celebrated republic, a father was invested with an absolute authority over the lives of his children; and he that was not a good son, was universally looked upon as a bad member of society.

Though we are perhaps the only nation in Europe who retain any part of the Roman freedom, yet perhaps we are the only one that does not retain a glimmer of it's exalted sentiments in this respect; for with us, small a portion of gratitude as we still continue to keep up, a parent is the only person in the world to whom we think it utterly unnecessary to be shewn; as if he who was entitled to the greatest share, should be the only one denied a mark of it at all. Nay, to so preposterous a length is the general opinion hurried away in this point, that a man who lends us a single guinea to riot in excess and sensuality, shall receive much greater instances of our gratitude, than an indulgent parent who toils during a whole life for our welfare, and makes a comfortable establishment for us and our posterity.

It is a received notion among the generality of people, that a son is no way obliged to his father for any tokens of affection which he may receive, because the old gentleman finds a particular satisfaction in providing for his happiness, and is sufficiently repaid if he sees his solicitude attended with the desired effects. Alas! Mr. Babler, what sentiments are we to entertain of people who reason in any manner like this? Does it follow, that because a parent finds a pleasure in the performance of his duty, that a son should think himself exempted from the necessary prosecution of his? The very pleasure which is here pleaded as the sufficient reward for the affection of the father, is to the last degree an aggravation of ingratitude in the son; and, instead of palliating the breach of his filial affection, leaves him without a possibility of excuse; for surely those who take a pleasure in the promotion of our happiness must be doubly entitled to our gratitude; and we ought to feel a glow of veneration arising from a consciousness of their motives, as much as from the actual benefits themselves.

For my own part, Mr. Babler, I am perfectly of opinion with the primitive Romans, that an ungrateful son can never make a good man; the ties subsisting between father and child are of a nature so inconceivably delicate, that he who is capable of bursting them asunder, is incapable of being bound either by gratitude or honour to any body else. It is incredible, Sir, to think the numberless hours of anxiety a parent must endure before he can rear a son to maturity. It is incredible to think, after he has even brought him to years of discretion, how unceasingly solicitous he is lest some unforeseen calamity should blast the harvest of his happiness, and cut him unrelentingly off. And what does a parent require for all this? What does he demand for the gifts of life, education, and fortune, which he has so liberally bestowed; but that the son will pay a little attention to his own interest, and treat the hand to which he is so eminently obliged with tenderness and respect?

From the foregoing cursory reflections, Mr. Babler, if filial ingratitude should of all other crimes appear the most odious, let me address myself to the bosoms of our youth, and, for their own sakes, request they will immediately shake it off; lest in their own old age, Providence might be pleased to make them know, in the emphatic language of the poet—

—How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is,
To have a disobedient child.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

SENEX.

## N° XCVI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27.

NOTHING is so general a topic, with all the old fellows of my acquaintance, as the depravity of the present times, and the visible degeneracy of manners, since they themselves were at the blooming age of five and twenty, and shone away in a splendid round of the various fashionable amusements. For my own part, though pretty far advanced in the vale of years, I am not altogether so passionately attached to my juvenile days, as not to be sensible that we had as many follies and vices among us then, as the severest satirist now existing can possibly point out; nor am I so complaisant to the present period as not to see that there is the greatest room, as well as the greatest necessity, both to be ashamed and to amend. In short, the world, with regard to vice and virtue, is pretty much the same as it was five hundred years ago; and, probably, for five hundred years to come, it will still continue to be actuated by the same motives, however it may differ in the manner or the means.

Greatly soever as we may imagine human nature to be degenerated, yet if we take but a slight survey of mankind, we shall find the principal number of our vices and follies to be rather the consequence of our inconsideration, than the effect of an absolute badness of heart. We are weak and vicious more through the levity of temper, and the prevalence of example, than either a narrowness of understanding or a depravity of inclination; and it is by denying ourselves time to examine either the absurdity of our most favourite pursuits, or the danger of a slavish obedience to fashion, that we so generally become the objects of our own detestation or contempt. Instead of making reason the guide of our actions, we are directed by example; and instead of enquiring how far such and such a behaviour may be agreeable to the sentiments of virtue, we never ask any question, but how far it is consistent with the custom of the times; hence we drink, fight, swear, and run through the whole catalogues of vices and follies, not so much because we like drinking, fighting, or swearing, as to avoid the appearance of singularity; and risque not only our happiness in this world, but our everlasting salvation in the next, for no other reason but to join in with the crowd, and seem of the same stamp with the general run of people.

Kitt Hairbrain is a young fellow of many good qualities, and has a heart as ready to relieve the distresses of his fellow creatures as any man of my acquaintance; yet Kitt would look upon it as the greatest insult imaginable, if you supposed he was not at any time willing

to

to cut the throat of his most intimate companion, and to debauch the wife or sister of his nearest friend; not but he would feel the utmost reluctance in the perpetration of either, and be sensible that it was a very unpardonable crime; but the force of example gets the better of his humanity, and he is more afraid of a laugh from a fool or a villain, than the eternal displeasure of his God.

Ask Kitt how he reconciles this behaviour, and he will answer, by the force of example too—'Damn it,' will he reply, 'I am sure I am no worse than Bob 'Brazen, Dick Dare, Will Wildfire, 'and a thousand others of my acquaint'ance;' and thus, as long as he finds any body as bad or worse than himself, cries hush to every argument of his reason, and goes on in the commission of new follies, or the perpetration of new crimes. Sometimes he compounds matters, and opens a sort of debtor and creditor account between his conscience and himself, with which he is not a little satisfied: as for instance, because he pays his debts punctually, he imagines he has no occasion ever to appear at the public worship of his Creator; because he frequently relieves one poor family, he looks upon himself as justified in plunging another into the worst of distress and disgrace; and because he sometimes fulfils the duties of Christianity, he fancies that in the general he has a right to make a jest of them all.

Alas! how many Kitt Hairbrains might be found, on an accurate inspection, through the kingdom! If the present paper should fall into any such hands, let me, if I cannot make an appeal to their reason, at least address an admonition to their pride, and advise them, if they must follow the example of their neighbours, to copy those actions only which are worthy of imitation and regard; since nothing but wisdom or virtue can vindicate the credit of our understandings in an imitation of any nature; and since he must be an idiot or madman, who treads in no other footsteps than those which are marked by the rascal or the fool.

## No XCVII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4.

THOUGH nothing is so common as to find every man dissatisfied with the lot in which Providence has thought proper to place him, yet nothing is so certain, as that no man, take his situation all in all, would be his neighbour instead of being himself. The great Father of the universe has graciously planted an inherent sort of pride in the breasts of all his creatures, which exalts them in their own opinion, and gives them an advantage over the rest of the world in some particular point that compensates for a thousand inconveniencies, and reconciles them to the severity of real or imaginary evils upon the whole.

If we examine the frame of the human mind, we shall immediately see, that every man holds much the same opinion of himself which he entertains of his country: he readily acknowledges, that in some particular circumstances such and such a person has an advantage of him; but, in the main, he nevertheless thinks himself the superior, and looks down with an air of disdain on all who are hardy enough to dispute his opinion. A modern author has not described this sort of vanity unhappily—

E'en the pale Russian, shivering as he lies
Beneath the horror of his bitterest skies,
While the loud tempest rattles o'er his head,
Or bursts all dreadful on his tott'ring shed,
Hugs a soft something closely to his soul,
Which soothes the cutting sharpness of the pole,
Elates his bosom with a conscious pride,
And smiles contempt on all the world beside.

I was conversing with my nephew Harry last night upon this subject, and the young rogue made an observation or two that gave me much satisfaction. 'I don't know how it is, Sir,' says he, 'but though my acquaintance are ever'lastingly wrangling with themselves, 'I can find none of them, upon a fair 'examination, willing to be any body 'else. There's Ned Grovely, for in'stance, who is perpetually cursing his 'stars for not giving him a good estate 'like Dick Bumper; yet, at the same 'time, the universe would not bribe 'him to make an exchange with Dick 'for legs. In the same manner Dick 'is very miserable at the clumsiness of

'his calves, but neverthelefs hugs himfelf up in the recollection that he can drink as much as any man in England at a fitting, and play an admirable game at all-fours.

'You know Sally Bromley in Pall Mall who vifits at my mother's, and is fo terribly pitted with the fmall-pox: Sally is to the laft degree unhappy on that account, and envies every woman with a tolerable face; yet I have frequently heard her declare that a fine fet of teeth was the firft of all the beauties; and then obferved how fhe turned round to receive the univerfal admiration with as much confidence as if fhe was an abfolute Dutchefs of Hamilton. In fhort, let me go where I will, I can find nobody but what is the *rara avis* of felf-imagination: neither poverty nor difeafe can eradicate the confequential fomething of the bofom that lifts us to the pinnacle of diftinction, and gives us fo great a pre-eminence above our neighbours. I have known a man with a tolerable voice refufe the acquaintance of a very deferving young fellow becaufe he could not fing; and heard of an Oxford fcholar, who, when he was afked his opinion of Shakefpeare, came out with a *pfhaw* of difguft, and replied, the fellow did not underftand Greek.'

When we confider thefe various foundations for happinefs which Providence has planted in the minds of all it's creatures, we cannot help admiring the goodnefs of the Divine Being in making our very foibles a fource of felicity, and creating fuch fountains of fatisfaction from fuch inconfiderable means. What gratitude is there not then due to fo all-fufficiently wife and beneficent a hand! Devotion itfelf is loft in admiration at fo ftupendous a bounty, and fcarcely knows which moft to wonder or adore.

But notwithftanding we derive fo much pleafure from the indulgence of particular foibles, we ought always to be uncommonly careful how we take any fatisfaction in the indulgence of our faults; thefe, though for a moment they may afford us fome degree of felicity, are always productive of anxiety and wretchednefs in the end. Unfafhionable as the doctrine of virtue and morality may appear, experience however fully convinces us, that nothing elfe can lay a folid foundation for happinefs; and that every other bafis is, literally fpeaking, building on the fand, and grafping alone at emptinefs and air.

## Nº XCVIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11.

IT was a very fenfible obfervation of Sir Richard Steel's, that in order to make a good fortune, it was neceffary to carry the appearance of an eafy one. The generality of mankind are always ready to refpect us in proportion as they think us opulent; and pay a veneration to our circumftances which they frequently refufe to ourfelves: neither the moft excellent underftanding, nor the moft benevolent heart, are ever treated with half the deference which the arrogant fwell of fortune receives at our hands; and we even paufe with a degree of reverence at the mention of ten thoufand pounds, when we fpeak with the greateft familiarity of Omnipotence, and jeft with the awful majefty of our God.

The moft whimfical fellow of this caft with whom I ever have been acquainted, was poor Ralph Harper: Ralph had an unaccountable refpect for rich men, though he never expected to reap a fingle fixpence from the happinefs of their circumftances; and, though utterly out of bufinefs, he would not be a day abfent from Change for the univerfe. It did him good, he affirmed, to fee fuch a number of rich people affembled together; and the fureft way in the world of gaining his heart was to introduce him to any body poffeffed of a large fortune. Whenever he met with a ftrange face in company, inftead of afking about character, the conftant queftion was, *what is he worth?* And inftead of an enquiry about good fenfe, he never troubled himfelf about any thing but what his name would bring at the bottom of a piece of paper. For a man with twenty thoufand pounds he had always a low bow; for one of fifty, a profound reverence; but if he found a perfon in poffeffion of a plumb, he was ready to pay him an implicit adoration. This unaccountable peculiarity he frequently carried to very ridiculous extremes. One day, in particular, he met me in the

city, and upon the ſcore of an old friendſhip, inſiſted I ſhould go home with him and eat a bit of mutton. I conſented; but unhappily, as we came down Cheapſide, he ſaw a ſober Quaker on the oppoſite ſide of the ſtreet who kept a tallow-chandler's ſhop ſomewhere in the neighbourhood of Barbican. On this gentleman he had no ſooner fixed his eye, than totally forgetting that I was his gueſt, he broke from me with all poſſible haſte, ſaying—'My dear Mr. 'Babler, you muſt excuſe me; yonder 'is a perſon worth thirty thouſand 'pounds, whom I would not miſs ſpeak'ing to for the world; he has aſked me 'repeatedly to dine with him, and I 'think now is as good a time as can be '—God bleſs you; I ſuppoſe we ſhall 'ſee you at the club in the evening.'

I could not help laughing very heartily at Ralph's manner of behaving; and having nothing particular to do, I took it into my head to follow him as cloſe as I conveniently could without being obſerved. I had not, however, gone above a hundred yards, before he gave an inſtant ſpring acroſs the kennel to a freſh face, and calling out to his little friend the Quaker, deſired him to go on, for it was out of his power to dine with him that day, having ſome very preſſing buſineſs to tranſact, which till then had entirely eſcaped his memory. I ſhrewdly ſuſpected that this new acquaintance was a man of rather greater fortune than the perſon for whom I had been ſo ſtrangely diſcarded. I was not deceived in my conjecture: he ſtopped to ſpeak to ſomebody, and Ralph likewiſe making a halt to wait for him, happened to meet my eye, and gave me a glance of no little ſignificance. As I was paſſing by him, he caught hold of my hand, and aſſured me, that that tall gentleman in black, who was ſtanding at ſuch a door, was one of the worthieſt fellows in the kingdom—'For,' ſays Ralph, 'there is not a day he riſes, but what he 'is maſter of ſixty thouſand pounds.'

In a few minutes Ralph and his friend paſſed me by, and the odd mortal was acquieſcing to every thing he ſaid with ſuch a humility of reſpect, that I thought it was wholly improbable he ſhould find any freſh opportunity of ſhifting his company. Notwithſtanding the plauſibility of appearances, however, in leſs than five minutes he was in full chace after a chariot that drove through St. Paul's Church Yard with the greateſt rapidity, and was ſaid to belong to a Jewiſh merchant of the firſt eminence, well known at that time for his intimate connection with Sir Robert Walpole.

If the poſſeſſion of a large fortune could beſtow either worth or good ſenſe, I ſhould never be ſurpriſed to ſee the rich treated with the utmoſt reſpect; or had people even but a diſtant expectation of gaining any advantage from the opulence of their purſe-proud acquaintance, ſomething might be ſaid in their defence; but where without a ſhadow of merit, or a hope of his conferring a favour, a man is next to be idolized, merely *becauſe* he is maſter of ten or twenty thouſand pounds, I own I cannot help being hurt at the little-mindedneſs of his worſhippers, and muſt inevitably tax them with a palpable poverty of ſpirit, if not a total want of underſtanding.

In the diſſolute reign of Charles the Second, the celebrated Killigrew was one night at ſupper with the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Dorſet, Lord Rocheſter, and ſome other noblemen of the moſt eminent abilities: the latter, by ſome means, happened to turn the converſation on the great honour which Killigrew received from the dignity of his company. The wag, who, notwithſtanding the inferiority of his rank, poſſeſſed more real ſenſe than the whole groupe put together, took all in good part for ſome time; till at laſt, finding matters grow a little ſerious, he ſtood up and delivered himſelf to the following effect. 'And pray, my lord, whence 'proceeds all this mighty honour which 'I am thought to receive? From your 'dignity, I ſuppoſe, and your fortune? 'As to the firſt, you find, by ſad expe'rience, that where there is a want of 'worth, this gew-gaw of title won't 'keep a man from contempt; a fool, or 'a raſcal, is equally a fool and a raſcal, 'whether he is a plain Killigrew, or a 'great Earl of Rocheſter. As to the ſe'cond point, your fortune, when you 'make me the better for it, why then it 'will teach me to eſteem you; till then 'don't mention it as a matter of the 'leaſt importance to me; for as long as 'I pay my reckoning, and receive no 'obligations, in regard to circum'ſtances I am company for a Crœſus, 'and would not ſuffer an emperor to 'treat me with the ſhadow of a diſre'ſpect within the walls of a tavern.'

## Nº XCIX. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18.

I Have often delivered it as my opinion, that one of the principal indiscretions which any woman can possibly be guilty of, is to receive the addresses of a lover whom she does not mean to encourage. If he happens to be a worthy man, it is ungenerous as well as cruel to keep him in suspence; and he is too poor a sacrifice even for her vanity if he happens to be a fool. But if a just consideration for the lover does not more commonly excite an exalted share of benevolence in the female bosom, it is surprising that the ladies are not more generally actuated by a sensible regard for themselves, since this indiscriminate permission which they grant to the addresses of an indifferent admirer, may very fatally injure them with the real object of their esteem; and give the man who has indeed the possession of their hearts, but too much reason for imagining that the same vanity might induce them *after* marriage to encourage that fascinating voice of admiration, which was found so exquisitely ravishing to their ears *before*.

It is a mighty pleasant notion which prevails among the greatest number of our young ladies, that there is a sort of destiny in love; and that it is utterly impossible to resist the orders of their fate in the disposition of their hearts. Perhaps neither the army nor the playhouse has destroyed the quiet of so many bosoms as the belief of this delightful predestination; for a girl now-a-days, no sooner has a hankering after a fellow, but she imagines the stars have been at work about her, and looks upon it as obeying the will of Heaven to follow—the bent of her own inclinations.

One thing indeed very remarkable in the decision of the stars, is, that it never lays any disagreeable restraints upon the mind of a young woman; on the contrary, with an unparalleled degree of good-nature, the stars always give those orders which are most certain of meeting with her own approbation, and are as tender of her repose and satisfaction as she can possibly be herself. This excessive complaisance in the stars furnishes the designing and illiberal part of our sex with many opportunities of gaining the most mercenary or most infamous ends; it enables us to rob a woman, not only of all filial affection, but to strip her of her fortune and her honour; and puts it in our power not only to destroy all her happiness in this world, but to endanger her everlasting felicity too.

That my fair readers may know with certainty at what time the stars begin to influence their conduct, I shall set down some infallible rules which will serve them upon all occasions; and which, if rightly attended to, may possibly prevent a thousand inconveniencies to many individuals, and a thousand anxieties to many families.

First, then, Whenever a young woman begins to make secret appointments with a man, for the mere sake of chatting with him, and taking an agreeable walk, she may be pretty confident that the stars are then debating about the future disposition of her life, and that she is in a fair way of losing her reputation.

Secondly, Whenever she receives a letter upon the subject of love, and declines either peremptorily to forbid the addresses of the sender, or to disclose the affair to her friends, she may be satisfied that her stars are very deceitful, and that they are only tempting her to wretchedness and disgrace. The reason is obvious. A lover has no occasion to be concealed who would make an unexceptionable husband; and few ever require the secresy of a mistress on this head, but those who have a design against her honour or her fortune.

Thirdly, Whenever she is uneasy about the absence of any particular man, nettled at seeing him with any other woman, or angry at hearing any part of his conduct condemned, the symptoms strongly indicate that the stars are going to deprive her of her heart; and it behoves her to be uncommonly attentive to the principles and merit of the person for whom she feels this partiality.

And fourthly, But if, instead of real worth, and fine understanding, the object of this partiality should be fashionable only by his vices, and eminent only for his knowledge in the superficials of

behaviour, let her then, if ſhe would counteract the malignity of her deſtiny, and ſoar ſuperior to the ſtars themſelves, let her exert her reaſon to tear the growing tenderneſs from her heart; and above every thing, if her favourite has once in his life betrayed the confidence of any other woman, let her baniſh him inſtantly from her ſight, and recollect, that a man who has once violated the vows of love, is too deſpicable ever to be loved at all.

## Nº C. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

IT is really ſurpriſing, when we conſider that the people of the preſent age have juſt the ſame ſenſes of taſte, ſmell, and feeling, and juſt the ſame faculties of hearing and ſight as their anceſtors poſſeſſed, that there ſhould be ſo wide a diſparity in their manners, as almoſt to furniſh a ſuppoſition that we are quite a different ſpecies, and have nothing in our compoſitions that can indicate our deſcent, but the mere form of our progenitors.

To be ſure it muſt be acknowledged, that our deviation from ſome manners of former ages was a very ſenſible proceeding, as many of the ancient cuſtoms were infinitely too barbarous to be kept up among a people who every day made ſo rapid a progreſs in all the delicacies of breeding which conſtitute the ſtandard of real gentility. Formerly, a blunt ſincerity, little better than abſolute rudeneſs, was the characteriſtic of the times, and every man thought himſelf obliged to deliver his genuine ſentiments upon every occaſion, let thoſe ſentiments be ever ſo offenſive to his acquaintance. At this happier period, we are entirely for accommodating our language to the wiſhes of the world; and therefore the whole tendency of our expreſſions is to make every man more and more ſatisfied with himſelf. Hence we ſoften the moſt palpable avarice into diſcretion and œconomy; diſhoneſty paſſes for wildneſs and diſſipation; blaſphemy, for humour and wit; and abſolute murder, for ſpirit and vivacity. In ſhort, we are ſo extremely well bred, that there is not a vice but what we keep in countenance by our politeneſs, nor a folly which we do not ſupport from a principle of civility.

The refinement of the preſent age does not, however, content itſelf with making people happy in their own opinions, but it recommends them alſo to the reſpect of the world, and raiſes the moſt inconſiderable characters to an inſtant degree of dignity. Now-a-days it would be unpardonably vulgar to call a milk-woman by any other appellation than that of a lady; and the meaneſt artiſan within the weekly-bills, if he happens to want an apprentice, will publicly advertiſe for a *young gentleman.* A bit of lace upon a waiſtcoat makes a ſquire of a fellow who has not ſixpence in the world; and a paltry little enſigncy is as ſure of conferring the formidable word *captain*, as if the owner had actually given a thouſand guineas for a company. As to the more elevated titles of knight, lord, marquis, and duke, they are ſo notoriouſly kept ſacred for men of real integrity and virtue, that complaiſance never has it in her power to degrade them by any caſual proſtitution to the undeſerving; theſe, therefore, muſt be exempted from the ſeverity of animadverſion, and ſuppoſed to continue in the ſame priſtine ſtate of purity as when they were originally conferred upon our anceſtors.

But of all the deviations which we have made from the cuſtoms of antiquity, I know of none which does a greater honour to our politeneſs than the judicious diſregard which at this ſeaſon of the year we ſhew to a ridiculous feſtival, that uſed to be formerly celebrated with ſo much ſolemnity by our progenitors. As the name of this feſtival may poſſibly be forgotten among people of extraordinary elegance, it may not be amiſs, perhaps, to obſerve, that it was called Chriſtmas, and was held as an annual commemoration of the Deity's wonderful goodneſs in ſending his only Son to take upon him the form of human nature, and to make an awful atonement for the ſins of mankind. Among our forefathers this anniverſary was conſtantly conſidered as a teſt both of their principles as Chriſtians, and their benevolence as

men;

men: an event which brought no leſs than everlaſting happineſs to all the world, they thought it improper to paſs without marks of particular joy; and were ambitious to imitate the benignity of their Creator, as far as their abilities would reach, by exerciſing every act of benevolence between themſelves. Hence, at the return of Chriſtmas, the ſighing heart naturally expected a mitigation of it's ſorrows; and it was reckoned nothing more than a duty to wipe away the tear of affliction from the eye of diſtreſs. After the offices of charity were thus performed, nothing prevailed but a univerſal feſtivity; and every face was either dilated with the emotions of gratitude, or expanded with the more tumultuous ſenſations of joy: a continual intercourſe of the moſt friendly nature ſubſiſted between family and family; and, in ſhort, the acknowledgments which were made for the mercy of the Divine Being, participating in ſome degree of a divine fervour, *all* (to uſe the poet's definition of paradiſe) *was harmony and love*.

In the preſent age, as we are much too polite to entertain any notions of religion, ſo we are much too ſenſible to ſhew any ſolicitude about the day in which the Almighty Founder of what was once a belief in this country, came into the world. Inſtead, therefore, of ſending at this period to relieve the ſons and daughters of calamity, we fly where it is impoſſible for their lamentations to reach us; and, inſtead of maintaining a ſocial intercourſe with our neighbours, we lock ourſelves up, and give an unlimited ſcope to the gloomineſs of our own reflections. Indeed, a moſt perfect intimacy of cards all this time goes on between us and our acquaintance; we viſit one another in the moſt unreſerved manner by meſſage and compliment, and are the deareſt friends on earth, through the negociation of a couple of fellows in livery.

If poſterity ſhould happen to differ as widely from us as we have differed from our forefathers, I ſuppoſe, in the courſe of a century or two, it will be looked upon as inelegant to know that ſuch a feſtival as Chriſtmas ever exiſted, and thought prepoſterouſly Gothic for a man to be acquainted with the names of his own family. Politeneſs may render it neceſſary, perhaps, to make a total revolution in the affairs of the world; and as now we are all ambitious of being reckoned men of ſenſe, it may then be the mode to appear in the real character of the preſent times, and the univerſal wiſh of every man, like honeſt Dogberry, to be ſet down a fool.

## Nº CI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 2.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

IT was an excellent obſervation of the celebrated Rochfoucault, that vice and virtue were never judged of in proportion to the real deformity of the one, or the native excellence of the other, but only in proportion to the reſpective rank of thoſe with whom either were to be found; the difference of ſtations always aggravating the enormity of the firſt, or derogating from the beauty of the latter.

That there is but too much foundation for the remark of this illuſtrious writer, no man acquainted in ever ſo ſmall a degree with the world can take upon him to diſpute: the ſame action, which in a tradeſman would be mentioned as a matter of no merit, in a nobleman would be ſpoke of with the higheſt admiration. My worthy friends upon the Change ſeldom think there is any great compliment due to a mechanic for being punctual in diſcharging what he owes; but let me aſk, if they do not talk in raptures of a nobleman, at the court end of the town, if he happens to be unfaſhionably remarkable in paying his debts? If a tradeſman ſeduces an unhappy innocent from the paths of virtue, the crime is heightened in the blackeſt dyes; but let a man of faſhion be guilty of the very ſame action, and it ſinks under the ſoftening appellation of modiſh indiſcretion, or illiberal vivacity. If a general behaves gallantly in the field of battle, his reputation is immortal; but let a private centinel perform the moſt aſtoniſhing prodigies of valour, the obſcurity of his ſituation caſts a veil over his merit; we mention him perhaps a ſecond time, and then conſign him to oblivion ever after.

If a proper examination was to be made into the cafe, this partiality on the fide of rank would appear no lefs ridiculous than unjuft; for people in the more elevated ftations of life receiving an education that ought to teach them the nicer proprieties of behaviour in a manner fuperior to the ordinary claffes of mankind, are confequently bound to a ftricter obfervance of their duty than thofe by whom they are not fo perfectly underftood. Yet fuch, we fee, is the depravity of the age, that thofe claim the wideft difpenfation from their moral obligations who ought to be beft acquainted with the neceffity of their being difcharged; and thofe only are rendered inexcufable, who, from their education and rank in life, are neither fo convinced of the neceffity, or fo happy in the means.

Was a poor ignorant foot-boy to blafpheme his Maker, the crime would be confidered in it's proper colours; but fhould his mafter take the fame liberty with the Divine Being, it would be reckoned no more than a lively ftroke of wit, or the cafual refult of a fprightly imagination. We have lately feen a poor man publicly punifhed for fpeaking too freely of Mofes's legation; while a Bolingbroke has been held in general admiration, though he denied the diviner miffion of Chrift. Happy, however, is it for the meaner orders of people, that they are bound to a rectitude of behaviour from which their fuperiors think themfelves exempted by the indulgence of the laws; as the wholefome reftriction which they live under in this world will be of infinite advantage to their fituation in the next.

But to condemn the prefent æra only for this glaring partiality to rank, would be injuftice to ourfelves. The hiftory of all ages, and the annals of all nations, are fraught with examples where the vices of the low are dreffed up in the moft aggravating light, and their virtues as conftantly fuppreffed. Patriots and poets, heroes and philofophers, owe as much to their rank as to their abilities, unlefs they lived at particular periods when they were uncommonly rare, or had indeed an uncommon fhare of abilities to recommend them. Had not Ovid been a man of fafhion, his writings would not have outlived himfelf, notwithftanding his egregious vanity; but his rank ftamped a fort of merit upon him in his days, and hence they are looked upon with admiration in ours; nor would the immortal Marcus Brutus have ever been handed down with reverence to pofterity, had he, like the unhappy Mr. Felton, been only an obfcure lieutenant of foot.

As I have touched upon patriotifm, I fhall beg leave to conclude my paper with as great an inftance of patriotifm as hiftory can poffibly produce, though the patriot was no more than an ignorant malefactor, who fuffered for a highway robbery when the neceffity of the times had left his family without bread.

The third of June, 1734, one Michael Carmody, a journeyman weaver, was executed in the county of Corke, in Ireland. His branch of bufinefs had been long in a very declining way, owing to the wearing of cottons, which was highly deftructive to the woollen manufactory, and in general injurious to the kingdom. The criminal was dreffed in cotton; and not only the hangman, but the gallows, was decorated with cotton too. When Carmody was brought to the place of execution, his whole thoughts were turned upon the diftreffes of his country; and inftead of making ufe of his laft moments with the prieft, the poor fellow addreffed the furrounding multitude in the following extraordinary oration—

'Give ear, O good people, to the 'words of a dying finner. I confefs I 'have been guilty of many crimes that 'neceffity obliged me to commit; which 'ftarving condition I was in, I am 'well affured, was occafioned by the 'fcarcity of money that has proceeded 'from the great difcouragement of our 'woollen manufactures.

Therefore, good Chriftians, confider, 'that if you go on to fupprefs your own 'goods by wearing fuch cottons as I 'am now cloathed in, you will bring 'your country into mifery, which will 'confequently fwarm with fuch un'happy malefactors as your prefent ob'ject is, and the blood of every mife'rable felon that will hang, after this 'warning from the gallows, will lie at 'your doors.

'And if you have any regard for 'the prayers of an expiring mortal, I 'beg you will not buy of the hangman 'the cotton garments that now adorn 'the gallows, becaufe I can't reft quiet

'in

'in my grave if I *should see* the very 'things worn that brought me to misery, thievery, and this untimely 'end; all which I pray of the gentry 'to hinder their children and servants, 'for their own characters sake, though 'they have no tenderness for their 'country, because none will hereafter 'wear cottons, but oyster-women, criminals, whores, hucksters, and common hangmen.'

I submit to the reader of judgment, if sentiments of a more patriotic nature could heave from the bosom of a Sidney or a Russel, than what breathed in the coarse unstudied harangue of this unfortunate malefactor? At the very hour of death, in the immediate apprehension of an eternity, dressed up in all the horrors of Popish bigotry and superstition: I say, at such an hour, an ignorant, poor wretch, to be only mindful of his country's welfare, is a greatness of soul superior to the most celebrated Stoic of antiquity, and throws even the *Cato of Utica* in a scale of comparative cowardice, was there a possibility of a parallel. But, as Mr. Pope beautifully says—

'Tis from high life high characters are drawn,
A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn;
A judge is just; a chanc'llor juster still;
A gownsman learn'd; a bishop—what you will;
Wise, if a minister; but, if a king,
More wise; more just; more learn'd; more ev'ry thing.
In life's low vale, the soil the virtues like,
They please as beauties; here, as wonders strike.
Though the same sun, with all diffusive rays,
Blush in the rose, and in the diamond blaze,
We own the stronger effort of his pow'r,
And always set the gem above the flow'r.

## Nº CII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 8.

### TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Have not been more pleased a long time than at reading one of your late papers relative to the general absurdity of toasting. You have very justly observed, that in proportion as any kingdom is inclined to drinking, it is barbarous of course; and have, with the greatest reason imaginable, estimated the understanding of every people by the criterion of sobriety.

My motive for taking so particular a notice of that paper, Mr. Babler, is my being married to as worthy a little man as any within the weekly bills, who has one unhappy propensity, and that is an invincible attachment to the glass. At a very early period he was introduced into life, and commenced an acquaintance with a set of subaltern worthies, who were distinguished by the name of *Damn'd honest fellows*, and always placed the summit of human felicity in the midnight roar of a tavern.

Having, through some unaccountable infatuation, imbibed an extraordinary opinion of this hopeful class of gentlemen, he always regulated his conduct, not by what the considerate part of mankind was likely to think of his behaviour, but by what it was probable the little circle at the Black Swan would be inclined to imagine at the next meeting: hence there was scarce an absurdity into which he did not launch with an exquisite relish, nor an irregularity which he did not look upon as a mark of superior understanding. He got upon the table to sing—'When forc'd from 'dear Hebe to go,' and burned his wig out of honour to the royal family. Every battle which our armies gained abroad was sure to keep him in a constant state of intoxication for a fortnight; till, by incessantly pledging the health of our various gallant commanders, he had almost entirely exhausted his own.

By this time his friends thought it absolutely necessary that he should look out for a wife, and take up. By means of an old family connection, I was the first person proposed to him: his relations spoke to mine, settled the affair, and we were married in about three months. For near six weeks there was not a more domestic man in the universe; he supped regularly at home, drank a chearful pint, or played a game at cards with two or three orderly friends in the neighbourhood. But, unluckily, this mode of living was too unexceptionable to last for any continuance: a favourite companion of his

his came accidentally to town, took him out one evening to the Black Swan, and re-kindled that rage for underbred festivity which originally led him into ſuch a perpetual round of exceſs. He now went out every night, and ſeldom returned till two or three in the morning. My fears for him kept me continually up till he came home, and then I had the pleaſure of receiving him in ſuch a pickle as is much more eaſy for a gentleman to imagine, than it is either poſſible or proper for me to deſcribe. Suffice it, however, that he was intoxicated every night, and every day underwent a moſt ſevere indiſpoſition to recruit himſelf againſt the fatigues of the next evening.

This has been the caſe, Mr. Babler, for almoſt five years; and you can ſcarcely ſuppoſe how miſerable I have conſtantly been from his ridiculous mode of proceeding: yet, Sir, though I flatter myſelf that I am capable of adviſing him pretty much to his benefit, I have never preſumed to ſay a ſingle ſyllable. Let the admonitions of a wife be ever ſo tender or reſpectful, they are always looked upon as ſo many indirect commands; and a huſband is immediately ſet down among the hen-pecked fraternity, if he pays the leaſt attention to her advice, however neceſſary for the intereſt of his fortune, or the credit of his underſtanding.

I am forcibly led, Mr. Babler, into a communication of family-affairs, becauſe I do not chuſe to lay the folly of my huſband's behaviour immediately before himſelf, and have no friend whatſoever on whom I could rely for the proper execution of ſo difficult a taſk. Every body ſuppoſes, becauſe I have the key of the caſh, and am never checked for laying out what money I think proper, that I muſt be a very happy woman. But, alas! Mr. Babler, the caſe is widely different: my huſband has, to be ſure, a thouſand good qualities; but do theſe qualities ſecure him from broils in the hour of intoxication, or prevent him from being contemptible in the interval of exceſs? About a week ago he came home to me with his eye almoſt cut out by a drinking-glaſs, which was thrown at him for refuſing a particular toaſt; and, no later than laſt night, he was brought to the door in a coffin, upon the ſhoulders of four companions, who, by way of dirge, ſung the Roaſt Beef of Old England, as they carried him; while the helpleſs poor creature, at the end of every ſtanza, endeavoured to raiſe himſelf up, and chorus with—' O the ' rare Engliſh Roaſt Beef.'

My huſband's health every day decaying, through theſe irregularities, and his character likewiſe ſinking into contempt; I beg, Mr. Babler, you will tell him that the name of *an honeſt fellow*, or the applauſe of a noiſy room, is but a poor compenſation for the ſacrifice of his life, and the ruin of his family. Tell him, Sir, that his companions are people who cannot poſſibly have the leaſt regard for him; becauſe they are dead to every conſideration for themſelves—a rational entertainment they are utterly unable to enjoy, becauſe they are never happy till reaſon is totally deſtroyed. Tell him, Mr. Babler, in ſhort, that life is a matter of much importance, and ſhould never be laughed away for the applauſes of a fool. Next to being a blockhead himſelf, the greateſt impeachment of his underſtanding is to aſſociate with blockheads; and, next to being a profligate himſelf, the greateſt reflection upon his heart, is to throw away his time upon men of profeſſed irreligion and immorality. I am, Sir, &c.

MARIA.

## Nº CIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 15.

THE high and mighty lords of the creation are for ever valuing themſelves upon the ſuperior dignity of their ſex, and not only deny the poor women any thing like an equal ſhare of underſtanding with themſelves, but even refuſe to ratify their claim to an equal degree of principle; as if it was not ſufficient to entertain a contemptible idea of their intellects, without eſtabliſhing as mean an opinion of their hearts. Hence has the notion of female friendſhip particularly been an object of conſtant ridicule to every faſhionable writer; hence have we been a thouſand times aſſured, that a laced cap, or an elegant pair of ruffles, was a matter conſequential enough to break the ſtrongeſt bonds of eſteem that

that ever ſubſiſted between two of the moſt ſenſible women in the univerſe: and hence it hath been aſſerted, that there is no poſſibility for their intercourſe to ſubſiſt a ſingle moment after each of them had entertained a favourable ſentiment about the ſame man.

Without once ſtriving to refute any of theſe poſitions, I ſhall only lament that the gentlemen have not endeavoured to give ſome teſtimonies in ſupport of their own conduct, before they attempted in this good-natured manner to caſt the firſt ſtone; becauſe it is rather unfortunate, that the charge ſo ſtrongly urged againſt the ladies, ſhould at the ſame time exiſt with infinitely more juſtice againſt themſelves. Let us, however, for argument, ſuppoſe, that the friendſhip of two women, extremely worthy in every other reſpect, is capable of being entirely broken by the minuteſt circumſtance which we can poſſibly conceive; ſtill, will not a moment's examination of the other ſex convince us, that their boaſted friendſhips are equally liable to the ſtrongeſt interruptions from cauſes equally trivial; and that men of the beſt underſtanding frequently run into the moſt dangerous exceſſes, from circumſtances generally more deſpicable, and always as abſurd?

I readily grant, that it is very ridiculous in a woman to break off all manner of connection with an intimate acquaintance, merely becauſe this acquaintance may unfortunately happen to be better dreſſed: but is it not to the full as ridiculous for a couple of fellows, who perhaps poſſeſs the moſt exalted underſtandings, and are beſides, in all probability, intruſted with a part of the national welfare, to fall out about the niceties of a horſe-match, or to diſagree about the ſuperior excellence of a game-cock? Undoubtedly, yes; and though I ſhall not even pretend to exculpate the ladies where they chance to be rivals, and ſuffer their reſentment to tranſport them beyond the bounds of diſcretion; ſtill I think it much more excuſable, when they have a little ſcene of altercation about a worthy man, than when the lords of the creation proceed to cut one another's throats about ſome infamous ſtrumpet, whom they both look upon with an equal degree of contempt.

This being the caſe, then, in the name of wonder, whence comes it that the poor women are eternally condemned for the inſtability of their friendſhips, when this very inſtability is carried to exceſſes infinitely more criminal, as well as ridiculous, among ourſelves? Are the lords of the human kind, with all the mighty ſuperiority of their wiſdom, to be continually indulged in the commiſſion of errors, of which the meaneſt driveller among the ignorant wretches of the other ſex would be to the laſt degree aſhamed? Alas! the ladies may cry out, with the lion in the fable—It is well that the men are the only painters on this occaſion, or the tables would be inſtantly reverſed!

We may blame the caprices of the women as we pleaſe, and cenſure their abſurdities as we think proper; but our partiality will never be able to change the poſitive nature of things: few of their follies are ever more than ridiculous; few of our own are ever leſs than criminal. How heartily do we laugh, when a couple of ignorant girls, as we call them, have the leaſt diſagreement, and break out into altercation: yet, which of ourſelves would not imagine he was bound in honour to reſent the moſt unguarded expreſſion of vehemence in a friend, even at the hazard of his life in this world, and the riſque of his eternal happineſs in the next?

The quarrels of the women, as they are generally leſs abſurd in their beginnings, ſo their reſentments are generally more ſenſible too. Where a lady has received an offence, ſhe ſeldom does any thing more than withdraw her acquaintance, and treat the perſon who offers it with a proper degree of contempt. The regard ſhe entertains for the dignity of her ſex, renders it unpardonable to go further: but the lord of the creation is, by the ſuperior degree of his ſpecies, allowed a right of plunging into the deadlieſt crimes; and, by his exalted underſtanding, a privilege of committing the groſſeſt abſurdities. If he happens to meet with a ſlight injury, he inſiſts upon giving his enemy an opportunity of doing him an irreparable one; and muſt waſh away the imaginary diſhonour, either with the blood of his antagoniſt or his own. To be ſure, it is rather hard to take away the life of a friend, for a caſual vehemence of temper; and rather ſtrange, to reduce one's ſelf to a level with a perſon from whom we have received an offence. But what of that? The glorious inconſiſtency of manhood obliges us to act in contradiction to our reaſon; and the fear of

of a laugh from a blockhead, is infinitely more terrible than the vengeance of our God! We all of us, in ſhort, are ready to run a man through the body, who calls us either a ſcoundrel or a fool; though the invariable tenor of our conduct indicates the ſtrongeſt ambition for both of theſe reſpectable characters; and we are infinitely more offended at being *ſuppoſed* either a raſcal or an idiot, than at being *abſolutely* the very thing itſelf.

## Nº CIV. SATURDAY, JANUARY 22.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Have read Mr. Johnſon's celebrated preface to Shakeſpeare with much attention; and though I look upon it on the whole as a very maſterly piece of writing, yet I think in ſome places he has dealt rather uncandidly with his author; and, in others, argued not a little repugnant to reaſon in his defence.

Mr. Johnſon, in the firſt place, gives Shakeſpeare very little credit for his tragedies; and calls them, in more places than one, rather the conſequence of labour than the effect of genius. There is, to be ſure, great deference due to the opinion of ſo learned a commentator; but yet, with all poſſible reſpect to Mr. Johnſon, the opinion which he here pronounces is nothing more than bare aſſertion, and conſequently cannot be admitted as abſolute proof. For my own part, I know ſeveral gentlemen of the firſt abilities, who declare that Shakeſpeare's tragedies are replete with ſuch beauties as every diſpaſſionate reader muſt allow to be the ſpontaneous reſult of the moſt exalted imagination; in fact, it is the genuine force of genius, which, amidſt ſuch a heap of abſurdities, renders his tragedies ſo univerſally admired, and gives them ſo prodigious a ſuperiority over all the other poets that ever appeared in this country

In a queſtion of this kind, the feelings of a man's own heart are infinitely better judges than the moſt elaborate arguments of the firſt ſcholar in the kingdom. We may be frequently loſt in the mazes of erudition, and be led into a thouſand perplexities in the immediate purſuit of perſpicuity; but the feelings never can draw us into any miſtake. When the voice of nature calls at our boſoms, we may be certain that genius is not very far off, however ſhe may appear clogged with an uncouth heavineſs of expreſſion, or a total diſregard of the unities.

Indeed, if Mr. Johnſon means that the verſification, neceſſary for tragic poetry, muſt be more laboured than the familiar ſtile of comedy, where every man converſes as if he was in common company, his obſervation may have ſome weight; but ſtill it will be no impeachment of Shakeſpeare's genius for tragedy. Every body knows that verſe requires more attention than proſe; and nobody is a better judge of this truth than Mr. Johnſon. All, therefore, that the remark can prove upon the whole is, that Shakeſpeare being more confined to verſe in his tragic than in his comic compoſitions, neceſſarily employed a greater portion of time in writing the former than the latter, and might, conſequently, in a comparative ſenſe, be ſaid to labour at his tragedies. That this is the real ſtate of the caſe, whoever has read him with any degree of care, will readily confeſs; for wherever he has introduced verſe into his comedies, we find juſt the ſame toil after the nicety of expreſſion, as we ſee he has uſed in the moſt diſtreſsful of his oppoſite performances.

It muſt undoubtedly be allowed that, in all the verſification of Shakeſpeare, there is a ſtiffneſs which frequently appears diſagreeably uncouth, or ridiculouſly affected. But when we conſider at how early a period this great man wrote, inſtead of being ſurprized that we meet it ſo often, we ought to be aſtoniſhed at not meeting it oftener ſtill. Our language was then almoſt in it's infancy, and verſe wanted the hand of experience to poliſh it into harmony and grace. Exalted, therefore, as the genius of Shakeſpeare was, he could not work miracles, nor take upon him to give that mellifluence to numbers which was only to be obtained from the ripening tenderneſs of time.

Mr.

Mr. Johnſon having urged this objection againſt the tragedy of Shakeſpeare, he tells us, that in comedy this great man was paſſionately fond of a quibble; and in order to ring the changes of a deſpicable witticiſm upon a word, he would frequently ſacrifice both juſtneſs of expreſſion and natural propriety. To be ſure, I muſt acknowledge that Shakeſpeare was rather too much addicted to this error; but Mr. Johnſon, while he indulged the ſeverity of the critic, ought to have maintained the candour of the commentator: he ſhould have conſidered, that this mode of quibbling was the literary vice of the time; and that conſequently the whole æra was more to be cenſured than any individual who gave into the abſurdity. Every age has ſome certain ſpecies of wit to diſtinguiſh it; and this wit the ableſt authors muſt ſometimes ſtudy with attention, but none more particularly than thoſe who write for the theatre. A popular joke has more than once turned the fortune of a piece; and in the early periods of the drama, before the taſte of the people was tolerably eſtabliſhed, it might be neceſſary to countenance a general foible, for the ſake of ſecuring a general approbation. A dramatic writer, unlike all others, has his fate frequently depending on the whimſey of an audience; and therefore it is ſometimes dangerous to combat with received prejudices. If a conjecture might be hazarded, I ſhould imagine that this was Shakeſpeare's opinion; for after he had fully fixed his character with the world, we find him in ſeveral of his pieces finding fault with the quibbling propenſity of the times, and telling us that—

Every fool can play upon a word.

On theſe accounts, I ſhould imagine that where Shakeſpeare condeſcends to ſport upon words, he has a great deal to be ſaid in his extenuation; and therefore I cannot agree with Mr. Johnſon, that a quibble was the Cleopatra for which he was content to ſacrifice the world; ſince, had he made that the ſole object of his admiration, he would have loſt that world in a very little time, inſtead of keeping it as he has done for near a couple of centuries, without any thing like the ſhadow of a competitor.

Having thus animadverted upon Mr. Johnſon's capital objections to Shakeſpeare, I ſhall make one obſervation upon his defence of that illuſtrious writer, with reſpect to the general diſregard of unity which appears in his productions. The unities, or the conſiſtency of times and place, Mr. Johnſon ſeems to think as matters of no great importance in dramatick repreſentations. It is impoſſible, argues this learned commentator, for any ſpectator to ſuppoſe, that a ſtage and a few ſcenes are in fact either Athens or Rome; and it is alſo impoſſible for an auditor to imagine a Timon or a Cæſar can now be actually preſented to our view, who have been dead ſuch a number of centuries: of conſequence, infers Mr. Johnſon, the preſervation of time or a place can be no way eſſential, ſince every body is ſenſible that the whole repreſentation is nothing more than an agreeable ſtory, calculated entirely for the amuſement of the public.

With great deference, however, to Mr. Johnſon's ſentiments, I muſt remind him, that the principal pleaſure which ariſes from any play, ariſes from a ſuppoſition of it's being a reality. We all know that we ſit to ſee a ſet of people paid for the public entertainment; yet we alſo know, that unleſs we inſenſibly loſe every idea of their real perſons and employments, we imagine either that they perform extremely ill, or that the play is a very inſipid production. If, then, in the appearance of the actors, we wiſh to ſee probability preſerved, why ſhould we not expect this probability in the circumſtances of time and place? The more probability is kept up, the eaſier we are deluded into what we wiſh, and conſequently the more properly an author conſults the material buſineſs of the drama; when we alſo add to this, that the unities may do much good, and cannot poſſibly be productive of the ſmalleſt diſadvantage, I don't ſee how a ſingle argument can be urged in favour of Mr. Johnſon's hypotheſis, to have the leaſt weight with an intelligent reader.

When I look back and ſee what I have ſaid, I am abſolutely ſtruck with my own preſumption, in contradicting ſuch a writer as Mr. Johnſon; but as I am not ſtimulated either by petulance or vanity, I am tempted to venture it for the public opinion; and, perhaps, if it ſhould be favourably received, you may hear again from yours, &c.

ANIMADVERTOR.

## N° CV. SATURDAY, JANUARY 29.

AMONG the ſeveral branches of oratory which have been lately taught by the celebrated Mr. Sheridan, I am not a little ſurprized that he has ſtruck out no ſpecies of this valuable ſcience for the uſe of the bar, nor thought of the proper method of inſtructing a pupil how to become a ſhining ornament to the long robe, notwithſtanding the variety of examples which he might find in this kingdom. Perhaps Mr. Sheridan may ſuppoſe a good education, a fortunate memory, and a florid delivery, the principal requiſites to form an orator for the bar. If he does, he is very much miſtaken; for, to the honour of the preſent æra be it ſpoken, we are bleſt with an infinite number of eminent lawyers, who have become a credit to the profeſſion without either education or memory, and indeed almoſt without any delivery at all.

Nor are the gentlemen in queſtion more generally diſtinguiſhed for their genius and abilities, than remarkable for their learning and elocution; on the contrary, they are univerſally acknowledged to be incumbered with no great load of intellectual faculties: a happineſs which they themſelves ſeem ſo ſenſible of, that they ſcorn to lay a claim to any qualification beſides an inflexible kind of impudence which is known under the faſhionable title of the *Bonfront*.

As I have paid ſome attention to the cuſtomary practice of theſe gentlemen, eſpecially in the moſt material of all points, the examination of witneſſes upon life and death, I ſhall take the liberty of laying down ſome invariable rules for the benefit of ſtudents, a tolerable adherence to which is more likely to render them conſpicuous at the bar, than the elocution of a Cicero or the equity of a Yorke.

In the firſt place, let it be a fundamental maxim with every ſtudent, that a lawyer (who ſhould be a gentleman and a Chriſtian) ought upon all occaſions to ſhew a perfect contempt for decency and good manners, and maintain a laudable inſenſibility to every tender feeling which is a credit to the human breaſt. It is beyond the poſſibility of a doubt, if he lays this principle for the foundation of his conduct, but he muſt in a little time riſe to the dignity of a ſilk-gown, and pave a ready way to an ermined robe, and a title-giving perriwig.

Upon no account, let a love of juſtice impertinently intrude itſelf into his thoughts, or make him imagine a moment, that whatever ſide of the queſtion he engages to ſupport is not infallibly the beſt. Let the robber confeſſed be ſuppoſed an unfortunate ſufferer from malice or miſtake; the catamite on record a perſon ſcandalouſly accuſed; and the hand yet reeking with the blood of innocence, the inſtrument of a juſtice too precipitate, or at moſt the inflicter, though of an illegal, yet an equitable revenge.

If an evidence compelled to appear againſt his client gives a teſtimony fair and unſullied as the ſoul of truth, every means muſt be made uſe of to confound and perplex him; every expedient of inſolence and chicanery practiſed to make him prevaricate; and if by ſome maſterly ſtroke there ſhould be a poſſibility of making him ſeem perjured, this violation of all law, this murder of all juſtice, ſhall ſave the villain from the gibbet, and render the lawyer immortal.

With regard to evidence, there are two methods of examination which muſt never be forgot: if the perſon to be examined is a poor ignorant ruſtic, or ſome aukward artizan, he muſt be conſtantly reminded that he is on his oath, and frightened into an acquieſcence with ſome neceſſary circumſtance, which the council ſhall good-naturedly make for him, to render the former part of his teſtimony inconſiſtent, and occaſion the whole to be ſet aſide. If this ſhould not be ſufficient to anſwer the laudable purpoſe in view, a number of hard and difficult expreſſions may be ſeaſonably introduced; the lawyer may alſo tell him 'You ſaid ſo or ſo, Sir,' (the confeſſions which he wants him to make) till the poor fellow, terrified at the thoughts of his oath, and almoſt ignorant of what he ſays, either in his fear or confuſion, ſhall acknowledge that he did.

On

On the contrary, when a gentleman conversant with the principles, though unacquainted with the infamous arts of the law, is to be called as a witness, he must be treated with scurrility and abuse; he must be called 'You fellow,' and asked the meaning of every obvious word, in order to rouse his indignation, and throw him off his guard. The moment his anger appears, the council in examination must be sure to keep it up, and by convenient repetitions of the most provoking and derogatory expressions he can think of, render him incapable of giving a clear testimony, and so invalidate every thing he says.

If it is his fortune to be on the side of the crown, let him follow the method already laid down of examining a witness; and though the prisoner's innocence be apparent as the sun, take every possible means of convicting him, as it will be highly to his reputation if he can get him cast. His abilities receive an additional lustre from his dexterity in the suppression of justice; and his character will be established for life, if the guiltless unfortunate should be hanged. Let him moreover sport with the hopes and fears of the unhappy wretch thus tottering on the verge of life, and humanely try every expedient to aggravate his misery, by occasional puns and witticisms on such circumstances in the course of the trial as may give him the smallest opportunity for a stroke.

There are no ill consequences to be apprehended by any student, and no resentment to be dreaded from the court from this method of going on; for, now-a-days, lawyers talk before a bench of judges, the immediate representatives of God and the king, with the same illiberal freedom as the respectable orators of Billingsgate; and use every artifice for the suppression of truth, as if it was criminal for justice to be satisfied, and absolutely necessary for *robbers* and *murderers* to make a triumphant escape. In slavish countries, indeed, uninspired by a sentiment of liberty and honour, the man who would take upon him to brow-beat an evidence would stand a chance of losing his head, and a judge who would suffer it might feel something more than a public disgrace. But in these happy regions, the person insulted in the cause of justice is the only one exposed to punishment, which he has more than a probability of undergoing, should he have the insolence to complain of being scandalously treated, to the court.

## Nº CVI. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5.

THERE is an unaccountable ambition among the generality of people, to enhance the consequence of their posterity, though at their own expence; and there is scarcely a father within the weekly bills, but what, if we are to judge by the mode of his behaviour, thinks his son considerably a better man than himself. I am naturally led into this consideration by a visit which I made to my landlord, an honest carpenter at the west end of the town, a day or two ago, to talk with him about repairing my house, and to pay him a twelvemonth's rent.

As it was past one o'clock before I set out, I arrived at Mr. Roof's just about dinner-time, and without much ceremony sat down with the family to a leg of pork and pease-pudding, and a couple of fine fowls with egg sauce. The company consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Roof, his two sons, and a young lady of about nineteen, very elegantly dressed, whom I took for some person that boarded in the house, but who, to my great surprize, I found was no more than my honest landlord's daughter. Mr. Roof and his wife were very plainly decorated; but the two sons had their hair done up in the *ala-mode à Paris* taste, and wore each a plain blue coat and a scarlet waistcoat very richly laced with gold. Upon enquiry into the professions to which they were brought up, I found that the eldest was a sort of superintendant to his father; and that the other had, by the recommendation of a nobleman in the neighbourhood, been lately advanced to a fifty pound place in the Excise. The young gentlemen, I perceived, by their conversation, looked upon themselves in a very consequential light, and so did their sister: they talked of nothing but earls and dukes, and frequently swore upon their

honours;

honours; whereas their father ſcarcely mentioned any thing higher than the bricklayer or timber merchant, and never preſumed to ſwear by any thing more elegant than his God.

Dinner was ſcarcely over, when the young lady and the two gentlemen got up in a careleſs manner, and took their leave with a polite elegance; taking care to let me know, however, that they were to drink tea at a gentleman's in New Bond Street, and from thence to adjourn to Covent Garden Houſe, to ſee the Maid of the Mill, having ſent a perſon for that purpoſe, to keep places. 'Ay,' ſays the father, after their departure, 'Suke has been teazing us a 'long time to ſee this opera; and ſo Bob 'and Alick, being diſengaged this 'evening, agreed to go with her, and 'have ſent Ralph Jenkins, our young'eſt apprentice, to keep a row for them 'in one of the green boxes. For my 'own part, my dame and I ſeldom go 'above once a year, and that is to Dick 'Yates's benefit; we even then ſit in 'the two ſhilling gallery, and go at 'half after two, for the ſake of getting 'a good place.'

'But why, Mr. Roof,' ſays I, 'do 'not you ſend Ralph Jenkins to keep 'a place for yourſelf and your good 'woman in the boxes at the ſame time? 'It would be much more comfortable 'than going ſo very early, and running 'the chance of being ſqueezed to death, 'by crouding into the two-ſhilling gal'lery.'

'Why, Lord, Sir,' returned my honeſt landlord, 'you do not think it 'would become a poor carpenter to be 'elbowing it among people of faſhion 'in the boxes! No, no, I am ſure you 'know a great deal better than that, 'and have only a mind to be a little 'merry with me.'

'You bring your eldeſt ſon, I think, 'Mr. Roof, up to your own buſineſs?' —'Yes, Sir; and a cleverer lad never 'ſtepped in ſhoe-leather: he ſhall draw 'a plan, or make an eſtimate, with any 'carpenter in the kingdom; nay, with 'Phillips himſelf, though every body 'muſt allow him to be an honour to the 'buſineſs: and then, if he was put to 'it to-morrow, he could get his bread as 'a journeyman—Why, Sir, I had 'him the matter of four years at the 'bench.'

'Well, then, Mr. Roof, is not your 'ſon a carpenter too?'—'Undoubted'ly, Sir.'—'Then, if it be improper 'for you, as a carpenter, to ſit in the 'boxes among the perſons of quality, 'muſt it not of courſe be equally as im'proper for him?'

'Ay, Sir, conſider he dreſſes in a very 'different manner from me; and that, 'you know, will make it overlooked.'

'True, Mr. Roof; but do not you 'look upon yourſelf to be as good a 'man as your ſon?'

'To be ſure I do, Sir.'

'Why, then, Mr. Roof, do not you 'dreſs as well as your ſon?'

'Why, becauſe I do not think it 'would become my ſtation.'

'Then, give me leave to aſk you, 'Mr. Roof, why you ſuffer your ſon 'to run into an error which you are ſo 'ſenſible as to avoid it yourſelf? Young 'men, you know, are naturally in'clined to be vain; and indulgences of 'this nature, where a young man is ob'liged to live by his induſtry, very often 'diſqualify him for trade. As he dreſſes 'like a gentleman, he is ambitious of 'appearing like a gentleman in every 'reſpect; and will conſequently aim at 'being equally idle and extravagant. 'This is one great error which I think 'many tradeſmen (excuſe me, my wor'thy friend, for it is my friendſhip 'makes me ſpeak) run into: as if their 'ſons were better men than themſelves, 'they dreſs them a thouſand times bet'ter; and not only add, by this means, 'to their conſtitutional vanity, but give 'them an early turn to idleneſs and 'expence. The circumſtance of youth 'can be no extenuation of their conduct; 'becauſe, if there be a degree of diſ'tinction any where due, it is to age, 'which is entitled to a much greater 'ſhare of veneration and reſpect.'

Finding the converſation rather aukward to my landlord, I changed the ſubject; but have the pleaſure of informing my readers, that Mr. Roof has ſince, with his own hands, ripped the lace off the young gentlemen's waiſtcoats, and has poſitively ordered his daughter never to appear in his ſight with a ſack.

N°

## Nº CVII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THERE is no ſubject which at preſent employs the pens of our eſſayiſts ſo much as Luxury. Every writer who is deſirous of ſhewing a profound knowledge, either in ethics or in policy, exclaims againſt it as a vice replete with the moſt dreadful conſequences; and inſiſts, that it will one time or other be the utter deſtruction of this infatuated kingdom.

Though I am very ſenſible luxury is the common parent of many conſiderable evils, I am at the ſame time perfectly ſatisfied it is the common parent alſo of the firſt bleſſings in every ſociety; for which reaſon I muſt differ widely in opinion from thoſe ingenious gentlemen who are for having it totally ſuppreſſed; and muſt not only expreſs my wonder at the tendency of their arguments, but even inſiſt that ſuch a circumſtance, ſo far from being deſirable, would be the inevitable ruin of every civilized kingdom.

The enemies of luxury, in all the arguments I have hitherto met with, ſeem to conſider this vice, as they call it, on no more than one ſide. They tell us, it leads us into a thouſand exceſſes, burſts frequently through all the laws of humanity, and excites ſo ſtrong a propenſity to pleaſures and parade, that reaſon is never able to govern our actions, and but ſeldom powerful enough to keep us from the commiſſion of any crime which has an appearance of promoting this general depravity or voluptuouſneſs of our inclinations. With all poſſible deference, however, to the opinion of theſe gentlemen, I ſhall beg leave to aſk if, by a ſtate of nature, they mean that original condition of mankind, when their food was the herbage of the field, and their drink the water of the ſpring; when their covering was the ſkin of ſome leopard, and their couch the naked lap of earth; when, in ſhort, though poſſeſſed of extenſive regions, they were ſcarcely poſſeſſed of any thing; and wandered, to uſe the poet's expreſſion, with their only acquaintance, the beaſts,

*Joint tenants of the ſhade?*

In thoſe early ages, before luxury was born, do we not read of continual frauds, oppreſſions, and murders? Do we not find, that when there were but two brothers in the whole compaſs of creation, one of them killed the other through envy, and hurled the boldeſt defiance to the very throne of his God!

The principal argument which political writers have ever brought againſt luxury is, that it imbecillitates the mind of every body; and, from gaining a univerſal aſcendency, ſinks a whole ſtate at laſt into a degree of ſoftneſs and effeminacy, which renders it utterly unfit for warlike enterprizes; and conſequently expoſes it to the machinations of every enemy. The Romans, ſay theſe gentlemen, while they continued undebauched by luxury, could conquer the whole world; that is, in plain Engliſh, they could rob and murder the nations of the earth, through an infamous principle of avarice, which they varniſhed over with the name of glory. Truly a bleſſed effect ariſing from this boaſted diſregard of luxury! But when, continue the ſagacious reaſoners, they once ſuffered this vice to gain footing among them, that moment they loſt all their uſual ardour, and were incapable of performing thoſe heroic atchievements which raiſed their anceſtors to immortality; that is, to explain this principle of argument ſtill farther, being by this time poliſhed into ſomething like humanity, they no longer had a paſſion for rapine or blood, but let other people enjoy peace and tranquillity for the ſake of enjoying ſo invaluable a bleſſing themſelves. And this is one of the dreadful effects ariſing from the prevalence of luxury. Truly a very proper ſubject for a moraliſt to complain of, who feels for the private diſtreſſes of his country, or the general good of all mankind.

In every age, ſince the commencement of Engliſh literature, poor luxury has been an everlaſting butt, as I ſaid before, for our moral and political writers. The firſt have been continually talking how prejudicial it muſt prove to individuals; and the latter have been as continually mentioning how fatal it muſt inevitably

inevitably turn out to kingdoms: yet, what a pity is it that universal experience gives so palpable a contradiction to all their declamations! Great Britain, I grant, has for many years been absorbed in luxury; yet that luxury has rendered us no way effeminate. In the late war we convinced our enemies that the most hardy æras of the Roman republic did not exceed us in valour; and possibly, should hostilities re-commence to-morrow, we should give them this conviction again with the greatest alacrity.

With regard to individuals, luxury may, in some measure, be considered as the immediate source of their existence. Every thing beyond the absolute necessaries of life is luxury. What, then, would become of our merchants without it? Our commerce would in an instant be annihilated, and our manufactures totally destroyed. People of fashion, instead of encouraging the sciences and the arts, would be hedging in the country; and our poets, painters, musicians, mercers, jewellers, and, in short, every person of every profession, would be reduced to much such a situation as the savages of America. For these reasons, therefore, let us not rail against luxury: if, in some cases, it gives us desires above our situation, and hurries us into excesses; let us, on the other hand, look upon it as the only parent of trade, and the general support of society. Above all, let the enemies of luxury be a little consistent with themselves, and recollect, that when they advise us to grow rich by a close application to our commerce, they in fact advise us to be luxurious; unless they can prove that it is criminal to enjoy this wealth after we have acquired it; and that it is to decline the gratification of our wishes, that we so incessantly labour for the means.

I am, Sir, &c.

A VOLUPTUARY.

## Nº CVIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19.

IF we take an accurate view of the world, and make a just observation upon the various characters it abounds with, we shall find those which in general attract our greatest admiration, seldom, if ever, entitled to our esteem; and those which work the strongest upon our wonder, the least entitled to our love. The glare of heroism or dignity only dazzles our imagination; whereas the milder virtues of domestic life never fatigue upon the sight, but, on the contrary, like a beautiful landscape, supply us with everlasting charms, and encrease upon the fancy the more they are enjoyed. The reader will easily see from the following letter, which my nephew Harry (who constantly acquaints me with every thing) lately received from Charles Hastings, a young fellow of his acquaintance, how I have been led into the foregoing reflection.

TO H. RATTLE, ESQ.

DEAR HARRY,

SINCE my return to Gloucestershire, a most melancholy circumstance has happened in poor Dr. Winterton's family, our old tutor, which I scarce know how to communicate, on account of some little concern which I have had in the consequences; but as I am sensible you will not imagine I have any self-sufficient motive to gratify by the relation, I shall proceed to the particulars, without any further apology.

Doctor Winterton had, it seems, gone indiscreetly as a security for his wife's brother, in a much larger sum than his circumstances could possibly bear; and the brother, being a villain, thought proper to make off a few days before the money became due: the obdurate creditor insisted upon instant satisfaction, and the doctor being unable to give it him, all his little effects were cruelly seized, and he himself thrown into the county gaol.

The circumstance reached my ear the third day after I went down, and though you know I have very little reason to be an admirer either of the doctor or his family, as I lost my uncle Goodwin's estate by the ill-natured representation which they gave the best action of my life, my setting our old school-fellow Raymond's sister up in a milliner's shop, yet I determined to interest myself a little in his affairs; and thought it ungenerous to remember any thing in the day of an enemy's calamity, but the greatness

greatneſs of his diſtreſs. Accordingly I got an intimate friend of his to prepare him for my viſit, and called on him the next day. The unhappy man ſcarcely knew how to receive me; Mrs. Winterton affected to be very buſy in ſetting the room to order; Miſs made an excuſe for abſenting herſelf; the three other daughters never took their eyes from ſome plain work about which they were employed; and the only perſon who ſeemed rejoiced at my coming was poor little Tommy, who is grown a moſt charming boy ſince you ſaw him; he ran to me the moment I came in, and crying—'Ah! Mr. Haſtings!' ſeized hold of my coat, and hung on me with a degree of innocent ſenſibility that almoſt melted me into tears.

As I heartily felt for the ſituation of the doctor, I embraced the firſt opportunity of taking him to an apartment of the gaolers, where I might offer him my ſervice, without diſconcerting him in the face of his family. I did ſo in the leaſt offenſive manner I was capable; and when I found him touched about his treatment of me to my uncle Goodwin, made uſe of every argument to reconcile him to himſelf, and applauded the goodneſs of his intention, without lamenting the conſequence which it had produced. By degrees I reſtored him to ſome appearance of chearfulneſs; aſſured him, I heartily ſympathized in his misfortunes; and begged, in a manner the moſt open I could aſſume, that he would tax my ability in the preſent exigence. To a mind not utterly deſtitute of feeling, my dear Harry, no circumſtance is ſo afflictive as an obligation from a perſon whom we have wronged. This I fully ſaw manifeſted in our old friend: he bluſhed inceſſantly, changed his ſeat every moment, ſtill attempted to apologize for former occurrences; till at laſt, incapable of holding it out any longer, he ſnatched my hand, kiſſed it with vehemence, and burſt into a violent flood of tears. In fact, Harry, I was as much to be pitied as himſelf: I was afraid every thing would carry the appearance of a triumph; and therefore ſtudiouſly avoided whatever I conſidered as tending to ſo unmanly a behaviour. This enhanced the little merit of my conduct with him; and the more I endeavoured to avoid giving him an anxiety, the more I added to his diſtreſs.

I will not dwell on the minuter parts of this tranſaction; ſuffice it, by advancing four hundred and fifty-ſeven pounds, I have brought him and his whole family back to the parſonage houſe; and am amply overpaid by a conſciouſneſs which I flatter myſelf is no way culpable, I mean that of having diſcharged a duty both as a Chriſtian and as a man. I ſhall be in town the firſt day of term, till when, my dear Rattle, adieu; and believe me to be, with an unalterable eſteem, your own

CHARLES HASTINGS.

When I ſee the immenſe ſums which people of fortune daily ſquander in search of felicity, I am aſtoniſhed to think how any man with a glimmer of underſtanding can think of recurring to the cuſtomary methods of obtaining it, when the ſecret conviction of his own heart points out the moſt eligible means. What is the winning of a thouſand battles? What is the poſſeſſion of a thouſand thrones to the performance of a ſingle action like this? If univerſal applauſe is our ambition, Virtue leads on to the immediate poſſeſſion of our wiſh; and while the trappings of pomp and precedence gain a curſory plaudit from our follies, ſhe, with the milder luſtre of one meritorious circumſtance, commands an everlaſting admiration from our hearts! It is in every man's power to throw the conquerors of the world at a diſtance in honeſt reputation: a humanity of temper outweighs a univerſe in value; and an immortality is to be purchaſed by a proper application of the ſmalleſt ſum, which the giddy profuſion of our nobility daily riſque upon a ſingle card.

## Nº CIX. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26.

THOUGH no body is better pleaſed to ſee a huſband place a proper degree of confidence in his wife than myſelf, nor wiſhes more ardently to have the married ladies treated with delicacy and affection; yet there is one ſituation in which I am frequently ſorry to find them diſtinguiſhed with extraor-

dinary marks of regard, and in which I think it would be much more for the credit of our underſtandings rather to doubt of their diſcretion, than to ſuppoſe it impoſſible for them to run into capital miſtakes. The ſituation which I here mean, is, where at our deaths, though we have a number of children, we rely implicitly on the tenderneſs of our wives, and leave our whole fortunes entirely in their power, from a prepoſterous opinion that they will faithfully employ every ſhilling for the benefit of theſe children, and be actuated by no other view than a maternal concern for their happineſs.

It is true, when we conſider the natural ſoftneſs of the female character, and recollect with what an aching intenſeneſs of ſenſibility a mother generally beholds her own offspring; when we ſee a woman's life apparently depending on a child, and have beſide for a long ſeries of years experienced in her fidelity every poſſible proof of a worthy heart and a clear underſtanding, it appears unaccountable that we ſhould entertain any doubts of her tenderneſs in thoſe laſt important moments, where all her feelings muſt be tremblingly alive for the loſs of a worthy huſband, and where the unprotected ſituation of her little orphans demands a double ſhare of her affection. Experience, however, fatally convinces us, that we cannot rely with any tolerable certainty upon the conduct of the ladies in general: neither their eſteem for the memory of a man whom they once idolized, nor their fondneſs for the very children in whom they ſeemed only to exiſt, are ſufficient to preſerve them from ſacrificing every thing which ought to be dear to a woman of ſenſe and humanity. The moment their tears are a little dried up, their hearts become ſuſceptible of ſecond impreſſions; and their unfortunate poor innocents are infamouſly plundered, to obtain the poſſeſſion of ſome inſidious admirer, whom they have not known perhaps a week, and whoſe principal adoration was excited by their fortunes.

I am inſenſibly led into this ſubject by an application which was made to me for charity yeſterday morning, from a woman once the wife of my old acquaintance Tom Eaſy. Tom was bred at Oxford, in the neighbourhood of which city he fell accidentally in company with this lady, the daughter of an obſcure clergyman; and, being ſmitten with her perſon, married her at once, not regarding in the leaſt her utter want of fortune. Happily for Tom, his father, who was a merchant in London, died before this marriage was diſcovered, otherwiſe it might have greatly endangered his inheritance; however, on taking poſſeſſion of the old gentleman's eſtate, which conſiſted of money in the funds to a very large amount, he brought Mrs. Eaſy to town, ſet up an elegant equipage, and lived away in a manner entirely ſuitable to the affluence of his circumſtances. I have dined more than once at his houſe, and never beheld a more affectionate huſband. His whole ſtudy was to guard his wife from the uneaſineſs even of a wiſh; and three charming little prattlers, with which ſhe bleſt him, ſo abſolutely rivetted her empire over his heart, that he often broke out into tears of exquiſite tenderneſs, if he gazed at her with any extraordinary ſhare of attention. Uncommon as theſe marks of regard might be conſidered, Mrs. Eaſy, nevertheleſs, ſeemed to merit them all. During the whole ſeventeen years of her marriage, ſhe never knew a will but her huſband's, nor ever paſſed a moment in the moſt faſhionable places of pleaſure, with a fiftieth part of that ſatisfaction which ſhe received at home from her little family. During Tom's laſt illneſs ſhe ſat up with him for ſeven weeks; and when, through the incredible diſtreſſes of her mind, and the exceſſive fatigues of her perſon, ſhe was at laſt rendered unable to move acroſs the room, ſhe had a mattraſs brought to her huſband's bedſide, where ſhe conſtantly echoed to his groans, and anſwered in a perpetual uniſon to thoſe ſorrows which ſhe could no longer attend upon with the medicines of relief.

Such unexampled proofs of conjugal attachment deſerved every mark of the moſt grateful acknowledgment, and Mr. Eaſy accordingly rewarded it with every ſhilling he was worth in the world; and died perfectly ſatisfied that ſo excellent a woman could never deviate in the leaſt from the juſt regard which was due to her children. But, alas! poor Tom was not buried ten weeks before this very woman gave her perſon and fortune to an Iriſh gambler; and threw both herſelf and her children entirely upon the capricious bounty of a raſcal, who was as totally loſt to ſhame, as he was deſtitute

tute of humanity. The conſequence of this unpardonable ſtep will be eaſily conceived by the reader of imagination. In leſs than ſix months Mr. Eaſy's three children were turned out of doors by the mercileſs ſtep-father. A ſubſcription was, however, raiſed among ſome friends for their ſupport; and they were all put out to profeſſions, in which they have a genteel expectation of earning their own bread. But as to the wretched mother, ſhe was marked out for a fate of much greater ſeverity: after the barbarous expulſion of her children, her hopeful huſband gave her the modeſt alternative, either of going about her buſineſs alſo, or of waiting upon a ſtrumpet in her own houſe, with whom he had been many years connected. The latter part of this propoſal, incredible as it may ſeem, ſhe rather choſe to accept, than to part entirely with the company of a villain who had brought ſuch deſtruction on her family. Though he was deteſtable to her juſtice, he was nevertheleſs dear to her heart; and ſhe thought it better to undergo every ſhame, and every mortification, than to be totally baniſhed from his ſight. A woman, who could act as ſhe did, deſerved to be treated as ſhe was: for three whole years ſhe lived the moſt miſerable of all ſlaves to her huſband's miſtreſs; underwent all the various rounds of inſult which could poſſibly be thrown upon her by the brutality of his profligate companions—till at laſt the Hibernian's death, in a duel, which was occaſioned by a reflection upon his honour at the moment he was detected in cogging a die, ſet her free; but left her wholly without ſupport; for her fortunate rival, the moment ſhe heard of his death, ſeized upon all his money and papers, ſold off the houſe and furniture, by virtue of a will which ſhe had for ſome time in her poſſeſſion, and ran away with another Iriſh gambler, before the unfortunate wretch, who was beſt entitled to every thing, could take any ſteps in her own defence, or even recover from that extravagance of grief in which ſhe was plunged by the loſs of a villain ſo utterly unworthy of her affection.

Is it neceſſary to argue with a ſenſible man about truſting his fortune entirely to a wife, after I have told him the foregoing ſtory? If it is, I muſt pity the weakneſs of his underſtanding, or he muſt tax me with a total want of abilities.

## Nº CX. SATURDAY, MARCH 5.

THE ſubject of my laſt number has brought me the following letter from a reader, who ſeems a young fellow of ſo much merit and good ſenſe, that I am doubly ſenſible of his misfortunes.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Received no little ſatisfaction from your ſtrictures on the abſurdities of thoſe huſbands who, through a ridiculous confidence in the tenderneſs and diſcretion of a wife, at their deaths inveſt her entirely with their fortunes, and truſt the welfare of their children wholly to the precarious continuance of her affection, or the caſual rectitude of her principles. I am, Sir, the unfortunate ſon of ſuch an inconſiderate father, and am ſtarving upon a fifty pound place in the Cuſtoms, while the offſpring of a ſtranger are rioting in his wealth, and vying in appearance with the firſt nobility on what ſhould be, properly conſidered, my inheritance.

My father, Sir, was an attorney of great practice in the city, lived univerſally beloved, and died as univerſally lamented. My mother and he had been married above ſixteen years, and a more affectionate couple was not to be met with in the kingdom: that he had at leaſt the moſt cordial tenderneſs for her appeared ſufficiently evident at the time of his deceaſe, for he left his whole fortune entirely in her power, and aſſigned it as a reaſon for his conduct, that his diſconſolate relict would be ſure of my duty when all my expectations depended upon her hand. But, alas! Sir, while he was thus doubtful of my behaviour to her, he did not conſider the poſſibility of her ſwerving in any points of affection to me; he did not conſider that a woman with a large fortune in her pocket, whether ſhe is handſome or homely, in the May-bloom of life, or

in the declining vale of years, is always certain of numerous admirers. He did not moreover recollect, that my mother was ſcarcely thirty-five; that ſhe was remarkably pleaſing in her perſon; and that conſequently ſhe had attractions which were liable to cauſe a change in her condition, even without the greateſt of all attractions, the ineffable beauty of her purſe.

Be this, however, as it may, the exceſſive concern which my mother teſtified for the loſs of her huſband, and the determined energy, even ſometimes of execration, with which ſhe exclaimed againſt a ſecond marriage, induced numbers to think that my father was not altogether ſo prepoſterous in his will, eſpecially as I was a ſmart boy of fifteen, rather tall for my age, and ſeemed entirely to engroſs my mother's affection. But, as Hamlet finely obſerves—

Frailty! thy name is Woman.

A little time leſſened the good lady's deteſtation to ſecond marriages: in about three months ſhe wanted company; and to remove this diſagreeable circumſtance, admitted of viſits from a few particular acquaintance; in leſs than half a year, ſhe could ſmile at a compliment to her looks, though ſhe was ſenſible 'nobody could like ſuch an old 'woman as her;' and before the turn of the third quarter, out of pure humanity, beſtowed her hand upon a handſome young fellow, without a ſhilling, who had ſworn to deſtroy himſelf if ſhe repulſed his addreſſes, and who doubtleſs was a man of too much honour to be worſe than his word.

To do my father-in-law juſtice, however, though he was a poor man, his reputation was unſullied, and he was neither deſtitute of ſenſe nor humanity; ſo that for ſome time I fared tolerably well, and received many little inſtances of his good-nature and affection: but unhappily, Sir, before the expiration of a year after the wedding day, my mother was brought to bed of a fine boy, and I was no longer conſidered with any remarkable ſhare of attention; on the contrary, the birth of this little ſtranger rendered me a kind of interloper in the family, and it was looked upon as a mighty obligation that I was allowed the common neceſſaries of life out of my miſguided father's fortune. As I was young, and naturally impetuous, a treatment of this kind frequently led me into complaints which, however juſtly they might be founded, were certainly injudicious; becauſe they might encreaſe the difficulties of my ſituation, but could not poſſibly procure me the ſmalleſt redreſs. They were alſo attended with this inconvenience, that they expoſed me to the cenſures of the world; for as long as I had a decent ſubſiſtence, it was thought by numbers the higheſt inſtance of ingratitude to my father-in-law, that I preſumed to find fault. In this uncomfortable manner things continued to go on, till my mother was brought to-bed of another child, about which time my father procured me a fifty pound place in the Cuſtoms, and deſired me to ſhift for myſelf.

It is now five years, Mr. Babler, ſince I obtained this trifling independence; and you may be ſure that I muſt have practiſed the moſt rigid œconomy to ſupport myſelf with any tolerable decency in theſe difficult times. I am indeed welcome to a dinner occaſionally at my mother's; but a ſingle guinea I have never received either from her or her huſband, ſince the time I quitted the houſe to the preſent hour. Both of them behave with civility enough, but neither with any degree of affection. All their tenderneſs is confined to the young children; and every ſixpence of my poor father's money is to be ſet apart for thoſe who are ſtrangers to his name and aliens to his family. My ſtep-brothers, and there are now no leſs than four, will have five thouſand pounds a-piece; while I, who ſhould in juſtice poſſeſs the whole after my mother's deceaſe, muſt probably ſit down with an humble ſuit of mourning, or even a paltry pair of gloves.

I have introduced this little narrative, Mr. Babler, to ſhew that where widows of fortune, who have children by a firſt huſband, even are happy in a ſecond choice, and beſtow their perſons on a man who treats them with the utmoſt tenderneſs, the children of the former huſband muſt nevertheleſs be material ſufferers. No people live together upon better terms than my mother and my father-in-law; yet I am injured in the higheſt degree, notwithſtanding the reciprocality of their affection. The property which ſhould have been mine, is now my father-in-law's entirely; and it

it is but reaſonable he ſhould give every preference to his own children. Nay, ſuppoſing my mother had ſtill retained every thing in her own hands, the iſſue of her ſecond marriage is as dear to her as the offspring of the firſt; and my father's ſubſtance would, even in that caſe, be divided, to make an eſtabliſhment for the poſterity of a ſtranger, at the manifeſt expence of his own. Thus, Mr. Babler, you ſee it is dangerous, at any rate, for a man to leave his children dependant on the diſcretion of a wife; eſpecially when we ſee the perſon thus truſted with the management of their intereſt ſo generally incapable of acting for herſelf. If this letter is no improper ſupplement to your laſt paper, print it; and believe me your's, very ſincerely,

HORATIO.

## Nº CXI. SATURDAY, MARCH 12.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THOUGH the obſervation is not over new, it is nevertheleſs extremely juſt, that the life of man is marked by diſſatisfaction; and that in the moſt flouriſhing ſituation of our circumſtances, we are ſtill pretty certain to repine under the hand of diſcontent.

I was educated for the church, Mr. Babler; and having but ſmall expectation of preferment, I endeavoured pretty ſucceſsfully to accommodate my mind to the narrowneſs of my expectations; and flattered myſelf that I ſhould be the happieſt man in the world, could I get but a curacy of fifty pounds a year. On this I thought I could provide every thing in a handſome manner; and when I was fortunate enough to be appointed to an income of ſuch a ſum, I actually lived for ſome time highly to my ſatisfaction; had a decent apartment, owed no man a ſhilling, and never wanted thoſe two capital eſſentials in the compound of ſublunary felicity, a mortuary guinea and a clean ſhirt.

I had not, however, been long in poſſeſſion of my curacy, before an increaſe of acquaintance brought on an increaſe of wants: I found that I had deceived myſelf, when I thought of circumſcribing my wiſhes within ſuch a trifle as fifty pounds. A hundred I then aſpired at, with all the eagerneſs my character could poſſibly admit; and was certain that this ſum would entirely anſwer all my wiſhes. Well, Sir, this hundred was at laſt obtained, and I ſet myſelf down for an uninterrupted round of happineſs. But ſee the futility of all human expectations! My deſires were again encreaſed with my fortune; and though my circumſtances were now doubled, I did not find myſelf in the leaſt richer than when I was confined to my humble fifty pounds. What was ſtill more extraordinary, I did not live a bit better than formerly: I ſeldom had more than the ſame ſimple joint of meat, and the ſame moderate glaſs of punch as uſual. My dreſs could undergo ſcarce any alteration; and as I ſtill lived in the country, and was a batchelor, I had no great occaſion to enhance the elegance of my apartment. My expences, therefore, were accumulated in mere articles of diſſipation, which could be of little ſervice to myſelf, and of leſs advantage to ſociety. I received continual invitations from ſome of the families round my pariſh to paſs an evening, and to make one at a party of cards. Here I generally loſt a ſhilling or two every night; and, as I was above living upon any body, I now and then requeſted the company of my hoſpitable friends, batchelor as I was, with their whole families. By this means, though I reſided in a very cheap part of the country, the profits of my pariſh were commonly eaten up by the time they became due; and I found myſelf even in a more embarraſſed ſituation than when I had but half the ſame revenue for my ſupport.

I now began to think, Mr. Babler, that a hundred pounds a year was infinitely too ſmall an allowance for the maintenance of any gentleman; and therefore, as my perſon was not very diſagreeable, I fancied matrimony as the moſt likely expedient to arrive at competence and content. In purſuance of this opinion, I accordingly looked out for a wife with money; and, in a ſhort time, had the good fortune to marry a very deſerving woman with

eight

eight thouſand pounds. Poſſeſſed of ſuch a handſome ſum, I conſidered it as nothing more than a proper compliment to my wife to live away for ſome time; and therefore ſet up a ſmart poſt-chaiſe, and acquired an additional ſhare of reſpect through the whole neighbourhood. But, alas! Sir, while I kept my poſt-chaiſe, I was obliged to make a ſuitable appearance in every other article of my expence. My table was furniſhed ſumptuouſly; and thoſe who were formerly among my moſt intimate acquaintance, now thought me too great for their company; and inſtead of thoſe cordial ſalutes of unaffected regard, which I was once ſecure of receiving in every quarter, I met with nothing but a diſtant bow of lifeleſs reſpect. This revolution, however it gave me uneaſineſs, apparently gratified the pride of my wife. She, like the generality of her ſex, was fond of glitter and parade, and openly rejoiced that we were extending the elegant circle of our viſitors. She piqued herſelf particularly on giving the beſt entertainments of any body in the country; and never ſaw a new gown or a freſh ornament upon her friends, but what ſhe was certain of having a richer ſilk, or a more valuable trinket, to appear in, if poſſible, the next Sunday. Thus, Mr. Babler, the number of wants which followed the enlargement of my circumſtances, reduced me to my original ſituation; and I had juſt as much money at command when poſſeſſed of five hundred a year, as I was maſter of at my firſt ſetting out.

My lot, Sir, is however infinitely more uncomfortable. If I leſſen my port, or diſengage myſelf from the company of thoſe with whom I have aſſociated ſince my marriage, I am ſure of being treated with ridicule or contempt. Beſides, to let your readers into a ſecret, I am what many wiſer men than myſelf have been in all ages, nothing more than the ſecond perſon in my own houſe. Mrs. Caſſock, you muſt know, has a great ſpirit; ſhe is alſo of a good family; and as every thing originally proceeded from her, I think her rather entitled to ſome indulgences. For theſe reaſons, though I could perhaps ſtand the ſevereſt bolts of ridicule, I am fearful to propoſe any ſalutary reduction in my expences; and yet, Sir, the difficulty I have to make matters meet in the end is inconceivable. With all this ſwellingneſs of appearance, I am frequently obliged to expoſe my neceſſities, and to borrow twenty or thirty pounds from ſome of thoſe very people whoſe acquaintance the vanity of my wife has ſo fooliſhly thrown off. Our high-bred friends muſt not for the world be made acquainted that we want a ſum of money, till the four per cents. are paid at the Bank in London—that would leſſen us for ever in their eſteem. But we can meanly ſtoop to ſolicit a favour from thoſe whom we have inſulted; and become abſolute ſuitors for the occaſional good nature of the people whom we have treated with the moſt inſuperable contempt.

This, Mr. Babler, to a man of any ſenſibility, is a very grating ſituation—I am a beggar in the midſt of affluence; and by too prodigal a uſe of thoſe favours with which Providence has been pleaſed to bleſs me, I feel all the wants of the moſt pungent diſtreſs. I am ſenſible what ſteps I ought to purſue, yet actually want the reſolution to be right; and though I know that a gaol muſt be my inevitable portion in two or three years, without I immediately alter my plan of living; ſtill the fear of giving uneaſineſs to the woman I love, unmans my temper; and I am rather more inclined to ſuffer even ſuch a diſgrace, than to give her any occaſion to ſuſpect either my gratitude or my love.

Now, Sir, that I have wrote this letter, I ſcarcely know for what purpoſe; but as it may poſſibly warn giddy-headed people from extravagance at their firſt ſetting out in the world, and ſhew your readers that the man who would be truly happy, muſt always live within the limits of his circumſtances; I ſhall even ſend it to you, and am your very humble ſervant,

CHRISTOPHER CASSOCK.

N°

# Nº CXII. SATURDAY, MARCH 19.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

IF the gentleman who wrote the laſt letter in your entertaining paper has reaſon to complain of his lady's ſpirit as the cauſe of an impoveriſhment in his circumſtances, you will think my caſe a ſtill more extraordinary, as well as a ſtill more lamentable, one, who am actually undoing by the œconomy of a wife; and have the pleaſure of hearing my turtle continually expatiating on the mighty merits of her prudence and management, in proportion as ſhe puſhes me ſtill nearer to the verge of deſtruction.

My entrance into the world, Mr. Babler, was as promiſing as moſt people's. I had a good two thouſand a year to my fortune; and my wife, who was the only daughter of an ancient family, brought me thirty thouſand pounds. Poſſeſſed of ſuch an affluence, one would ſcarce imagine that my circumſtances could have been prejudiced by the prudent management of my help-mate; or ſuppoſe that any thing but the moſt unbounded prodigality could, in leſs than three years, run me behind hand in the full ſum of fifty thouſand pounds.

My wife, Mr. Babler, is deſcended from a family, the female branches of which have for many years been diſtinguiſhed by ſome remarkable peculiarity. Her great grandmother, in Charles the Second's time, cured the beſt hams in all England; her grandmother never wore any ribbands but orange-colour after the Revolution; her aunt Molly always rode her horſe like a man; and her mother never ſat down to a knuckle of veal without eating two pounds. Sukey, at a very early age, was diſcovered to have her peculiarity too: in her little intercourſes with her play-fellows, ſhe would purchaſe all their toys at an inferior rate, and wait with the niceſt circumſpection till ſhe ſaw a wax-doll very viſibly wanting in a young lady's affection. By this means ſhe became miſtreſs of more playthings than all her acquaintance put together, and eſtabliſhed in the minds of her doating relations ſuch extraordinary ideas of her ſagacity, as made them regard her with an equal degree of tenderneſs and admiration.

The ſame peculiarity which diſtinguiſhed her early years, now continues to mark her conduct; and her whole ſtudy is to obtain what the world calls *a bargain*, without ever conſidering whether ſhe has the leaſt occaſion in nature for the commodity which ſhe purchaſes: hence, ſhe is eternally running from auction to auction, from broker to broker, and from ſhop to ſhop. Wherever there is the leaſt probability of coming at a bargain, they are always ſure of Mrs. Buſy's company; and it is a matter of little conſequence whether ſhe bids for a piece of porcelain, or an hogſhead of tobacco, a Michael Angelo, or a parcel of ſalt beef. Let there be but the appearance of a bargain, let her only know that the thing is ſold beneath it's intrinſic value, and that is a temptation not to be withſtood; ſhe ſtrikes off an agreement at once, and kindly leaves the payment of the money to poor Pill Garlick.

Through this unaccountable humour, Mr. Babler, I have ſcarce a room in my houſe but what is crammed with ſome of Mrs. Buſy's œconomical purchaſes. I have more china, Sir, than is requiſite to fit out an Eaſt Indiaman in her return, and more glaſs than the largeſt manufactory in England. I have above three thouſand Turkey carpets rotting in my garrets, and five hundred dozen of as good buck-handled knives and forks ruſting in my cellars as ever attacked a buttock of beef or an apple-dumpling. In ſhort, Sir, notwithſtanding all the heaps of money which Mrs. Buſy has ſquandered in the proſecution of her ridiculous propenſity, ſhe has not laid out ſo large a ſum as five pounds upon any one article that could either be of the leaſt uſe, or the ſmalleſt elegance, in her family. On the contrary, her purchaſes have been chiefly trumpery, which were leſſened in their value by neglect, and owed the mighty merit of their cheapneſs to the univerſal contempt in which they were held by every ſenſible chapman.

I do not ſend you this little narrative, Mr. Babler, with a view of working upon

upon the temper of my wife, or the pity of your readers. As to my wife, I have talked often enough to her to know the inefficacy of the ſoundeſt reaſonings; and as to your readers, I neither want their pity nor deſire it. My ſole motive for this publication is, to inform the world that for the future I ſhall not be anſwerable for her whimſies; that I ſhall not receive a ſingle article from any place with the following inſcriptions: 'Now ſelling by auction—The ſtock 'of a tradeſman quitting buſineſs— 'Parting with below prime coſt;' and a number of equally ſignificant inſinuations, to take in the thoughtleſs or the ignorant. The proprietors of theſe places may look out for other dupes, as I am determined they ſhall never get another ſixpence of my money, unleſs it be perſonally contracted for by, Sir, your's, &c.

BENJAMIN BUSY.

## Nº CXIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 26.

LOOKING over Dodſley's collection of poems a day or two ago, I met with the following little ode, which, though there is nothing more than a prettineſs in the verſification, nevertheleſs contains ſuch an uncommon degree of benignity in the ſentiment, as muſt fill every reader with the higheſt admiration for the excellence of the writer's heart; if he ſhould even conceive but a ſlender idea of his poetical abilities.

### ODE TO CANDOUR.

I.

THE deareſt friend I ever prov'd,
My bittereſt foe I ſee;
The fondeſt maid I ever lov'd,
Is falſe to love and me.

II.

Yet, ſhall I urge the riſing vow,
That tempts my wav'ring mind?
Shall dark ſuſpicion cloud my brow,
And bid me ſhun mankind?

III.

Avaunt, thou hell-born fiend—no more
Preſume my ſteps to guide;
Let me be cheated o'er and o'er,
But let me ſtill confide.

IV.

If this be folly, all my claim
To wiſdom I reſign;
But let no ſage pretend to name
His happineſs with mine.

Nothing is more cuſtomary with moſt people, than when they themſelves have made an injudicious choice either in friendſhip or in love, to exclaim at once againſt the world; and to declare that no conſideration ſhall ever induce them to honour any body with their good opinion a ſecond time: in purſuance of this ſtrange reſolution, they act as if every body was unworthy of a place in their eſteem, and make the behaviour of a ſingle individual an invariable ſtandard for the integrity of the whole univerſe. Hence they are continually tortured with the ſevereſt pangs of anxiety and ſuſpicion; wear away their exiſtence in an open warfare with ſociety; and die as unlamented as they have lived unbeloved.

A ſenſible mind ſhould, however, conſider, that the tempers of mankind are not leſs oppoſite than their various complexions; and that nothing can be a greater act of injuſtice than to entertain an ungenerous apprehenſion of our whole acquaintance, merely becauſe we have been deceived by any particular one. If we examine into the general courſe of our connections, whether they are founded upon friendſhip, or eſtabliſhed upon love, we ſhall find, that ſo far from having any right to quarrel with the world, the world will upon the whole appear not a little entitled to our regard, ſince in the general we meet with a much greater ſhare of ſincerity, both in friendſhip and in love, than what, from the ridiculous nature of our attachments, we have any probable reaſon to expect.

Now-a-days, what is it which forms the foundations of our friendſhips, or conſtitutes the baſis of our loves? Is it a ſimilarity in our manners, or an agreement in our purſuits? a conformity in our virtues, or a reſemblance in our crimes? Alas! theſe queſtions, if candidly anſwered, muſt load us with confuſion and reproach. In the choice of our friends, it is not an excellence of underſtanding, or a benignity of heart, which produces our intimacy, or attracts our

E. F. Burney del. J. Walker sculp.

Plate IV. Published as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. Novr. 11. 1786.

our eſteem. It is not the ſuggeſtion of our virtues which is conſulted in the choice of our friends, but the depravity of our inclinations. Does a man drink a bottle more than the generality of our companions—good; that man is a very honeſt fellow, and very proper to be ſet down as a friend: does another tell a ſtory, ſing a ſong, or ſpend the ſubſtance of other people with an uncommon degree of ſpirit—better and better; there can be no doubt of his worth; and we clap him in our heart's *core*, as Hamlet has it, in our *heart of hearts*: or has a third butchered his neighbour in ſome ſcandalous quarrel, ariſing from the outrageous exceſs of midnight profligacy—beſt of all; ſuch a friend is ineſtimable; an intimacy with him is not more flattering to our pride than agreeable to our wiſhes; we mention his heroiſm upon every occaſion; and in proportion to the cloſeneſs of our acquaintance, we conſtantly claim a ſhare in the luſtre of his reputation.

In like manner, where we form a ſtill nearer connection than friendſhip is capable of admitting, when we abſolutely look about for wives, by what ſalutary ſtandard do we regulate our inclinations? Will not a tolerable face have more weight with us than the moſt exalted underſtanding? And will not a tolerable fortune appear of more conſequence than the united recommendation of all the mental accompliſhments? When theſe things are notoriouſly ſo, what are we to expect but ſhame and diſappointment, but mortification and regret? At a ſituation like this, who are we to find fault with but ourſelves? If we truſt our property to the hands of a robber, can we expect it to be ſafe? And if we lodge our confidence or our felicity in the boſoms of the worthleſs, what greater ſecurity can we poſſibly hope to find, either for the prodigal depoſit of our friendſhips, or the frantic repoſe of our affections? Inſtead, therefore, of quarrelling with the world for deceiving us ſo often, we ſhould acknowledge ourſelves obliged that we are not deceived ſtill oftener. Our connections for the moſt part are injudicious, and conſequently ſhould be for the moſt part unfortunate; yet, for the honour of human nature be it mentioned, the world is not ſo ready to deceive as we are to let it; nor are our acquaintance half ſo much diſpoſed to be villains as we are diſpoſed to be fools. Let us not, therefore, becauſe we ourſelves are profligate or ridiculous, impeach the integrity of other people. If we have a mind to be fortunate in our friendſhips, or happy in our loves, let us not form attachments according to the advice of our paſſions, but according to the direction of our reaſon: the wiſe and the virtuous are thoſe which will ſtand the teſt of the cloſeſt examination; and theſe are the only people whom reaſon will ever point out as entitled in the leaſt to our eſteem or our affection.

## Nº CXIV. SATURDAY, APRIL 2.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

I Make no doubt, Sir, but the conduct of a weekly eſſay muſt be very troubleſome; and that a great part of your labours are unſeen, ſpent in efforts that produce nothing, and thrown away upon ſubjects that are found barren in the experiment.

If you ſhould at any time be at a loſs for a ſubject, I flatter myſelf you would find ſomething new in the hiſtory of thoſe obſcure ages, which modern readers have hitherto thought unworthy of their curioſity, and which lie deſerted becauſe unknown.

The hiſtory of the unfortunate Aranthes and Aſpaſia is among this number; and though their epitaph at Lyons in France has been printed in our books of travels, yet their ſtory at length is but little known.

Aranthes was ſon to the governor of one of the Mediterranean iſlands, and favoured with all the advantages of nature, fortune, and education. Aſpaſia was a Greek lady, beautiful beyond expreſſion, and admired by all the youth of Athens, which was then the place of concourſe for all the polite of the Roman empire.

Their mutual merit ſoon produced a mutual eſteem; and this was after ſome time converted into the moſt ardent paſſion. They both indulged the hopes of being happy in each other for life, when

Aranthes returning home to obtain his father's conſent, was taken by a pirate, ſold into the internal parts of Africa, and there condemned to toil with the moſt unremitting ſeverity.

In the mean time, Aſpaſia felt all that love and impatience could inſpire; one year paſſed away without hearing any news from her lover; another came, but ſtill the ſame ſilence: at length, an account arrived that Aranthes was no more; ſo that Aſpaſia now loſt her love in deſperation.

Time, that obliterates every paſſion, by degrees aſſuaged the pain which was felt by Aſpaſia; ſhe was at laſt brought to liſten to new addreſſes, and ſo far prevailed upon by the admonitions of her parents, that ſhe conſented to go into France with an old merchant who deſigned her for his ſon, then in Africa, trading with the natives of that barbarous region. Her voyage was ſucceſsful; and if her refined manners charmed the old man, the ſon, who ſoon after returned, was not leſs enchanted.

A day was fixed for their nuptials; and as he was the moſt opulent man of the country, all the inhabitants came ſucceſſively to offer their congratulations; and in order to add ſtill greater ſplendour to the ſolemnity, the young merchant who was to be bridegroom made her a preſent of fifty ſlaves, who were at that time juſt landed, and within half a day's journey to attend her.

As the preſence of ſuch a number of ſlaves, it was thought, would add to the magnificence of the entertainment, they were led up to the merchant's palace, loaded with merchandizes, as was then the cuſtom, and bending beneath their ſorrows and fatigue. Aſpaſia felt all that humanity can inſpire upon the ſight of ſuch diſtreſs, while they paſſed on ſucceſſively before her. But what could equal her emotions, when among the hindmoſt of thoſe unhappy wretches ſhe beheld her own Aranthes, emaciated with labour and affliction, and with his eyes unalterably fixed upon the ground! She gave a loud convulſive ſhriek, and fell ſenſeleſs into the arms of her attendants. As her ſituation naturally drew the eyes of all upon her, Aranthes ſaw once again the dear object of her earlieſt paſſion, and flew with haſte to her aſſiſtance. Their ſtory, and his misfortunes, were ſoon made known to the company, and the young merchant, with peculiar generoſity, reſigned his miſtreſs to the more early claim of Aranthes.

Were this ſtory a novel, it would end with the greateſt propriety in this place: but truth diſagreeably lengthens the account; for one day ſitting in a window of one of the apartments, happy in each other, and fluſhed with expectations of ſtill greater rapture, a youth, who with a bow had been ſhooting at birds in a neighbouring grove, drew it at random, and the arrow pierced both lovers at the ſame time. Thus a life of misfortune was terminated by as unfortunate an end. They were both laid in the ſame grave; and their epitaph ſtill continues legible, though erected near a thouſand years, a monument at once both of the caprice of their fate, and of their mutual fidelity.

I ſhall not make any addition to this ſtory, Mr. Babler, by unneceſſary obſervations: if the ſtory itſelf is not worth the attention of your readers, it can receive no benefit from any remarks of mine; ſo that I ſhall treſpaſs no longer on your patience than to aſſure you, with how much regard I am your conſtant reader, and very humble ſervant,

NARRATOR.

## Nº CXV. SATURDAY, APRIL 9.

THE character of an author is what ſuch numbers are ambitious of obtaining, that every day produces ſome addition to the republic of letters, and ſhews us a great many honeſt gentlemen who imagine that the publication of a book, let it be ever ſo uſeleſs or deſpicable, muſt raiſe them in the eſtimation of the world, as if the ſureſt way to eſtabliſh an idea of their underſtanding was to prove themſelves triflers or fools. For my own part, great a partiality as I may feel for the productions of the preſs, I ſet but a very ſmall value on thoſe works which are not likely to be of ſervice to ſociety. The moſt ingenious treatiſe on the wing of a butterfly has but very little merit, in my opinion; and my ridicule is much more eaſily moved where a man of real talents takes

an infinite deal of pains to prove some hypothesis, which, when it is proved, does not signify a sixpence to the world, than where I see a writer setting out to gain some point which will be really advantageous to mankind, but failing, through an obvious want of abilities, in the attainment of his end.

There is, however, no part of literature in which men of genius are so apt to trifle, or in which blockheads are so apt to be insufferable, as in poetry. Who, for instance, that reads Mr. Pope's *Rape of the Lock*, can forbear lamenting to find so much sterling fancy and exquisite versification thrown away upon a subject which cannot possibly be of the smallest benefit to the reader? Perhaps, of all the pieces which this great man ever published, the Rape of the Lock is the most finished and poetical; yet, must it not grieve a considerate mind to recollect that the Rape of the Lock is at best but a glittering toy, an elevated gewgaw, merely capable of amusing the fancy, but no way calculated to enlarge the understanding? Must it not grieve a considerate mind to see those astonishing abilities prodigally squandered on such despicable objects, when the choice of subjects suited to their natural dignity would have afforded the world a still greater degree of entertainment, and given it besides the most ample and salutary sources of instruction?

It is a very absurd opinion which a great many people adopt in regard to the end of poetry. So it amuses the fancy, they imagine it may neglect the heart; and so it tickles the ear in an agreeable manner, they never once trouble themselves about the effect which it is likely to have upon the understanding: thus they conclude, that the most exalted walk of all literature is to be the least useful to the world, and set down men of inferior talents only as the proper instructors of society. Absurd as this opinion is, it has nevertheless a prodigious number of advocates; and the generality of our modern poets seem to be so perfectly satisfied of it's justice, that one half of our compositions are nothing more than elegies on linnets or blackbirds—descriptions of a river or a meadow—verses to the spring—and ballads about milliners girls and mantua makers apprentices.

Did these worthy gentlemen however, consider, that poetry is to the full as capable of improving the mind as of amusing the imagination, perhaps they would endeavour to give us some gleams of common sense in their productions. Did they consider, that the principal number of our celebrated poets, while they entertained us with the finest ebullitions of genius, have given us also the soundest lessons of morality; and did they consider, that the harmony of numbers is almost entirely calculated to enforce the sentiments of virtue more strongly on our bosoms; they might be kindly led to mix a little reason now and then with their rhyme, and induced to believe, that the most polished versification is but a poor apology for dullness and insipidity.

The herd of modern versifiers unfortunately copy nothing but the defects of our celebrated writers. Instead of endeavouring to imitate the exalted flights of a Pope, they only follow him where he evidently descends; and because he, or because other great men, like Scipio and Lælius, have employed themselves in skimming some little poetical pebbles on the surface of genius, they claim an everlasting privilege to trifle also, and run continually into their faults, without once spiritedly attempting to reach the least of their perfections.

It is in reality surprising, when the main end of literature is to make mankind wiser and better, that the press is unceasingly teeming with productions which often want even the negative merit of having no harm to countenance the grossness of their stupidity. Whoever is desirous of being an author should always carefully attend to this material circumstance, the instruction of his reader; he should judiciously consider with himself, whether the publication which he is about to make is such as can either be serviceable to the judgment or the heart; advantageous to the cause of good sense, or beneficial to the interests of morality: unless it answers one of these ends, he never can promise himself either profit or reputation; and it will be much more for his credit to continue in his usual state of obscurity, than to call for the attention of the world to shew himself a weak or a worthless member of the community.

## Nº CXVI. SATURDAY, APRIL 16.

IT ſometimes happens, that men who make the moſt dangerous deviations from the laws of ſociety and the principles of virtue, in a great meaſure owe their crimes to the very benevolence of their hearts; and that, in the midſt of all their guilt, we find a dignity of ſoul which commands our higheſt admiration.

Frank Leeſon was the ſon of a country gentleman in Ireland, who poſſeſſed a little eſtate of about three hundred pounds a year; but who, with that liberality of ſentiment ſo particularly the characteriſtic of his nation, gave into an hoſpitality rather beyond the power of his circumſtances, and in promoting the happineſs of his friends, too frequently forgot a neceſſary attention to his own. The conſequence may be eaſily foreſeen by the intelligent reader. Old Mr. Leeſon was involved in perpetual difficulties, and was upon the eve of being thrown into priſon, when he was ſaved from a diſgrace of that nature by the extraordinary piety of his ſon. Frank, to a very excellent underſtanding, joined a very amiable perſon; on which account, a young lady with an independent fortune of 8000l. had long beheld him with a favourable eye: but Frank, being attached to another, whoſe beauty and merit were her only recommendations, had hitherto declined to profit by this lady's partiality; however, when he ſaw there was no other method of ſaving an infirm father and mother from poverty and bondage, the force of his filial affection got the better of his love. He tore himſelf from the woman of his ſoul, and married the eight thouſand pounds. With this money he paid off all the old gentleman's debts, and entered the world with a degree of reputation conſiderably ſuperior to the generality of his acquaintance.

As nothing could ſeparate Frank and his father, the old couple and the young lived for ſome time in the moſt perfect ſtate of harmony under the ſame roof; and the ſeverity of their former ſituation producing a neceſſary regulation in their expences, they were every day riſing no leſs in opulence than in felicity; when an unexpected misfortune left them, in the moment of their utmoſt ſecurity, without ſhelter and without bread. Old Mr. Leeſon, finding his health very much impaired, and conceiving a diſguſt, moreover, at the part in which he reſided, becauſe his friends had not formerly been ſo ready to aſſiſt him in his neceſſities as he had reaſon to expect; reſolved, with the concurrence of his ſon, to diſpoſe of his eſtate, and to make an adequate purchaſe in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where he might have an opportunity of conſulting the beſt phyſicians, and eſtabliſhing a more agreeable circle of acquaintance. Purſuant to this plan, he ſold every acre he poſſeſſed; had the purchaſe-money home in bills; and was preparing to ſet off for another part of the kingdom in a day or two, when an accidental fire reduced his habitation to an heap of aſhes, deſtroyed all his effects, and gave him ſcarcely a moment more than was abſolutely neceſſary for the preſervation of his family. Frank, whoſe whole property was alſo in bills, and packed up ready for the intended departure, loſt all in the general calamity; and was obliged, together with his father, his mother, and his wife, to take refuge at a neighbouring gentleman's for a few days, till they were in a capacity of reaching the metropolis; where Frank expected, from ſome letters which he obtained to the lord lieutenant, to procure a little eſtabliſhment either in the army or the public offices.

On the arrival of our unfortunate family in town, young Mr. Leeſon applied himſelf induſtriouſly to profit by his recommendations; but, alas! though he met with civility, he could obtain no relief. Every freſh application gave him nothing but freſh occaſion to lament the miſerable proſpect before him; and while he was continually cheering every boſom at home with the ſpeedy expectation of halcyon days, he had nothing but deſpair in his own. At length, deſtruction became too evident to be concealed: his father, who was now confined to his bed, had been a whole day without ſuſtenance; and young Mrs. Leeſon was every hour trembling, leſt the pains of parturiency ſhould oblige her to ſolicit the charitable aſſiſtance of the

E. F. Burney del. Grignion sculp.

Plate V. Published as the Act directs by Harrison & Co. Novr. 18, 1786.

the public. Thus ſituated, torn with a thouſand pangs for a wife who poſſeſſed his higheſt eſteem; for a father, whom he almoſt worſhipped, and a mother, whom he tenderly loved; Frank ſallied out one evening into the ſtreets, and ſtopping a gentleman, whoſe appearance indicated opulence, he demanded his money with ſuch a wildneſs of accent, that the gentleman, terrified out of his wits, immediately gave him a purſe of fifty guineas, and Frank eagerly retreated to his lodgings, depoſiting the money with his father, and telling him he had received it from the lord lieutenant's order, as an earneſt only of future obligations. The family at home not doubting the truth of this relation, poured out their whole ſouls in acknowledgment of the viceroy's goodneſs, and once more refreſhed themſelves with a comfortable repaſt.

Next morning, however, the robbery became noiſed abroad; and, to the great ſurprize of every body, a merchant of the firſt character and fortune was apprehended for the fact, and lodged in Newgate. On the earlieſt knowledge of this circumſtance, Frank immediately wrote to the innocent gentleman, deſiring him to be under no apprehenſion; for if he was not honourably acquitted, the perſon actually guilty would, on the day of trial, appear in court, acknowledge his crime, and ſurrender himſelf to the violated laws of his country. The gentleman naturally read his letter to every body; but though ſuch as were his friends talked of it as a moſt extraordinary affair, the generality of people conſidered it as a deſpicable artifice, calculated to impoſe on the credulity of the public. However, the day of trial at laſt came; and notwithſtanding the merchant's character appeared irreproachable before this unfortunate ſtain; notwithſtanding ſeveral perſonages of the higheſt figure proved him a man remarkably nice in his principles, and opulent in his circumſtances; the proſecutor was ſo poſitive in his charge, and a number of circumſtances ſo ſurpriſingly concurred, that he was actually convicted, and the judge proceeding to ſentence; when a loud noiſe of *Make way* ran through the court; and young Mr. Leeſon, with a manly yet modeſt countenance, ruſhing forward, demanded to be heard, and delivered himſelf to the following effect—

'You ſee before you, my lord, an 'unhappy young man, who once little 'thought of violating the laws of his 'country, and who wiſhed rather to be 'the friend than the enemy of ſociety: 'but who knows to what he may be urged 'in the hour of a piercing calamity; to 'what he may be wrought when deſti'tute of friends, and deſtitute of bread! 'I, my lord, was born a gentleman, and 'bred one. Six months ago I was ma'ſter of an eaſy fortune, but an acci'dental fire in a moment reduced me 'to beggary; and, what ſtill more diſ'treſſed me, reduced alſo an infirm and 'excellent father, an aged and tender 'mother, together with the beſt of wo'men and the beſt of wives, to the ſame 'lamentable ſituation. Encouraged by 'ſome recommendations to the great, 'we came up to town, and expected a 'decent means of procuring a ſubſiſt'ence: but, alas! my lord, thoſe who 'want compaſſion moſt, are thoſe who 'are moſt commonly diſregarded. In'ſtead of aſſiſtance, we received com'pliments, and met with the bow of 'frigid politeneſs where we looked for 'the bounteous hand of relief; ſo that 'in a little time our all was totally ex'hauſted, and my unhappy father, with 'the venerable partner of his youth, 'were above a day without any ſuſte'nance whatſoever; when, unable to 'ſee them expiring for food, I ruſhed 'forth, and committed the robbery for 'which this gentleman, now priſoner at 'the bar, has been condemned.

'This was not the whole of my af'fliction: a fond deſerving wife, who 'had brought me a plentiful fortune, 'lay alſo periſhing with hunger, and 'that too in a ſituation which demand'ed the tendereſt attention, and the moſt 'immediate regard. Such, my lord, 'were my motives for that unjuſtifiable 'action. Had the gentleman condemn'ed been happily acquitted, I had not 'made this public acknowledgment of 'my guilt. Heaven only knows what 'I have ſuffered during his confine'ment; but the empire of the univerſe 'would not bribe me to injure him far'ther; nor tempt me, by an infamous 'ſacrifice of his life, to conſult the ſafe'ty of my own. Here, then, my lord, 'I claim his ſentence, and demand his 'bonds. Providence will, I doubt not, 'now take care of my innocent family, 'who are equally ignorant of my crime, 'and

'and my ſelf-accuſation. For my own 'part, I am reſigned; and I feel no-'thing in conſequence of my approach-'ing fate, but from what I am ſenſible 'my miſerable friends muſt ſuffer on 'my account.'

Here Mr. Leeſon ended, and the whole court was loſt in approbation and tears. He was, however, condemned, but pardoned the ſame day; and his character ſuffered ſo little upon this occaſion, that the lord lieutenant gave him, with his life, a place of ſeven hundred pounds a year; while the merchant, who had been accuſed from reſembling him exceſſively, dying ſome time after without iſſue, left him his whole fortune, as a reward for ſo exemplary an act of juſtice and generoſity.

## Nº CXVII. SATURDAY, APRIL 23.

AS the managers of our theatres are, I am ſatisfied, gentlemen of too much underſtanding to be offended with any body for pointing out ſuch caſual improprieties as, in the great multiplicity of their buſineſs, may poſſibly eſcape their own obſervation, I ſhall employ the preſent paper in acquainting them with a circumſtance or two which may be altered much to the ſatisfaction of the public, without expoſing themſelves to the ſmalleſt inconvenience, or the minuteſt expence.

As I am very fond of a play, and generally take my ſtation in the pit, I am frequently offended at the conſtant interruptions which the performance meets with from the reſtleſs diſpoſitions of the muſicians, who, the moment an act is begun, always get up, ſtare about, perhaps, with an idle gape of ſtupidity, and then withdraw, though conſcious that their preſence is indiſpenſably requiſite in half an hour at the fartheſt. When the prompter touches his bell towards the cloſe of the act, the audience is again diſturbed by their entrance; and this entrance is made with ſo little caution, that the actors are abſolutely impeded in the proſecution of their parts, and the attention of the ſpectators very frequently called from the moſt intereſting paſſages of the play. Sometimes, theſe conſiderate gentlemen will even tune their various inſtruments while the performer is actually ſpeaking; and I have more than once heard Lear exclaiming againſt the unnatural hags his daughters to the disjointed ſqueak of a hautboy, the impertinent ſharp of a fiddle, or the drowſy hum of a baſſoon. In every play we are ſure of being diſturbed ten times by the very people who are paid to encreaſe our entertainment; and who ſurely ſhould, from motives of intereſt, if not from principles of gratitude, ſeize every opportunity of adding to our ſatisfaction.

What kind of corporeal qualities may go to the compoſition of a fiddler, I neither know, nor am I very ſolicitous of being informed. I cannot, however, help thinking but they might ſit as quietly in their ſeats as their paymaſters the public. During the courſe of an evening's entertainment, not one in a hundred of the auditors find it neceſſary to go out. Why, therefore, the whole band of muſic ſhould have occaſion to interrupt us regularly every half hour, is ſomewhat extraordinary. A little common ſenſe cannot ſurely prejudice the nicety of their ears, or the expertneſs of their fingers; and if not, what excuſe can they poſſibly aſſign for a behaviour ſo generally diſagreeable to the town, and ſo palpably below the practice of any men who pretended in the leaſt either to manners or to modeſty?

It is a circumſtance mentioned highly to the honour of the late Prince of Wales, his majeſty's father, that having by ſome unavoidable accident outſtaid his time one evening when he had commanded a play, he was no ſooner informed that the audience had been obliged to wait in conſequence of his delay, than he pulled out his watch in the full face of the houſe, as if he had recognized his error, and bowed with ſuch an acknowledgment of gracious condeſcenſion, as rendered him inconceivably amiable from his little miſtake. With all poſſible deference to the gentlemen of the catgut, and the profeſſors of the pipe, I think the Prince of Wales a perſonage of as much conſequence as the beſt of them; and therefore, if an

apology

apology was amiable in him for detaining an audience ſome minutes from a favourite entertainment, it muſt be thought a little preſumptuous in them to be perpetually diſturbing it. It is not, however, the members of the band to whom I addreſs myſelf, it is to their *immediate* maſters; and I flatter myſelf, after what I have here ſaid, I ſhall have but little occaſion to expatiate on the ſubject for the future, as the managers have good-ſenſe, and the public have recollection.

The next abuſe which I think wants reformation in our theatres, is the practice which ſome of the capital performers have of raiſing the price of the pit at their benefits. This, of all the acts of preſumption which I ever remember in the profeſſors of the ſtage, is by much the moſt glaring and unpardonable; and if it ſhould be tolerated but a few ſeaſons longer, there is no knowing to what lengths the temerity may be carried. I am far from being an enemy to the drama; on the contrary, I wiſh particularly well to the actors; and am never better pleaſed than when I ſee their merits properly rewarded by the munificence of the public. But I think there is none of our performers who ought not to be very thankful for a clear benefit of two hundred pounds. This either of the theatres will afford them at the common prices; and one ſhould ſurely imagine that they ought to teſtify their acknowledgments for the annual company of their friends, rather than make uſe of that very eſteem which the town entertains for them to load it with an additional charge. What they may think of the affair, I know not; but of this I am fully perſuaded, that the man who would not think himſelf highly obliged by a clear benefit of two hundred pounds, never deſerves to have a benefit at all.

Let us, however, examine a little into the general excuſe which the gentlemen of the theatres think proper to urge in extenuation of this extraordinary behaviour. Whenever they are reprehended on this account, their conſtant plea is, that they raiſe their price in order to oblige their friends; and that as nobody is forced to come, nobody can complain of an injury. This excuſe ſcarcely merits a reply; yet let me aſk the people who urge it, whether the theatre is not entirely a public entertainment; and whether they can properly diſpoſe of thoſe places to any particular individuals, which are equally appointed for the indifferent reception of all? Cuſtom has for a long time authorized the letting of places in the boxes; but cuſtom has never authorized an addition to the regular price—Why, therefore, the frequenters of the pit ſhould be excluded from their uſual ſeats without the payment of two ſhillings extraordinary, is a circumſtance which ſurpriſes me much. What have the pit part of the audience done that they ſhould be ſingled out to bear the impoſition of ſome arrogant favourite, whom they themſelves have probably raiſed into reputation? If an addition muſt be made to the price of tickets on benefit nights, let the tax become general; let the boxes and the galleries come in for their portion of the burden, and let not the people of the pit be the only perſons deſtined to bear the ſcourge of theatrical avarice and temerity. If an actor's friends want to put a ſum of money in his pocket, let them give double or treble the value for their own tickets; but let not the indifferent part of the public be obliged to pay for friendſhips in which they have no manner of connection. The buildings which formerly diſgraced the ſtage on benefit nights have been judiciouſly removed by the good ſenſe of the managers; it is therefore to be hoped, that they will ſhew as much readineſs in the ſuppreſſion of a palpable injuſtice as in the ſuppreſſion of a mere inconvenience; and that they will not ſuffer their performers to take a liberty with the public which they dare not take themſelves.

The laſt thing which I ſhall recommend to the managers is, to conſult the propriety of places, and to pay a little attention to the rank of their characters. What buſineſs has a party of the Engliſh foot-guards to attend upon a Perſian emperor! Or is it a reaſon that a prince ſhould not be habited like a prince, becauſe the actor who appears in the character has but thirty ſhillings a week? It is inconceivable how theſe little things affect an accurate obſerver! Who can bear to ſee the Duke of Cornwall's gentleman dreſſed better than the Duke of Cornwall himſelf? or endure with patience to ſee the perſons of one ſingle family

famly dreſt in the manner of half a dozen different countries? The probability of the fiction becomes deſtroyed by means of theſe ſlovenly inattentions; and Drury Lane or Covent Garden ſtare us continually in the face, when we want to be in Spain or in France, in Italy or Illyria.

## Nº CXVIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 30.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

THERE is a ſet of good-natured people in the world who, ſo far from rejoicing at the proſperity of their neighbours, are continually mortified whenever they ſee others growing up happily into life, and encreaſing in their circumſtances either by the force of their own induſtry, or ſome unexpected turn of good fortune.

You muſt know, Mr. Babler, that I was lately a ſhopkeeper in the Strand, and, though I ſay it myſelf, was as pains-taking a young fellow as moſt are. Being aſſiduous in my duty, I was ſucceſsful in my trade; and would in all probability have ſoon acquired a comfortable independence, had not the will of a generous relation rendered it unneceſſary for me to labour any longer, by bequeathing me a fortune of full twelve hundred a year. On this acquiſition I made over my ſhop to a worthy young fellow of my own family, and began to ſhew away a little ſmartly, naturally ſuppoſing, that as I was now a man of fortune, there could be no impropriety whatſoever in aſſuming the appearance of a gentleman; more eſpecially too, as my education had been tolerably genteel, and my friends were of no little conſideration in the country. Yet unhappily, Sir, though I ſhook my old acquaintance with as much cordiality by the hand as ever, and was as ready as ever to paſs an evening with them at the Crown and Anchor, nevertheleſs, the preſumption of ſetting up a carriage, and the vanity of wearing a bit of lace upon my coat, were inexhauſtible ſources of ridicule. It was expected that I ſhould be ſtill the very ſelf-ſame haberdaſher I originally ſet out in life; and inſtead of acting in the character I was now entitled to put on, it was thought inconceivably arrogant that I deviated in the leaſt from the ſimplicity of my mechanical appearance. Hence a thouſand ſarcaſms of under-bred ſmartneſs were continually ſpurted at me; and ſo far from gaining any little credit from the preſervation of my former affability, that very affability was aſcribed to ſome motives of affectation, and only ſerved to plunge me in additional contempt.

Wearied out with the malevolent reflections of the town, I determined at laſt to retire into Nottinghamſhire, where my property principally lay, in hopes that a new ſet of acquaintance would treat me in a very different manner; and that, ſo long as I behaved like a gentleman, I ſhould at leaſt be entitled to good manners and civility. But, alas! Sir, here I found, if poſſible, freſh cauſes of uneaſineſs and mortification. My profeſſion had been noiſed through the whole neighbourhood; and the gentlemen of fortune found it utterly below the conſequence of their characters to aſſociate with a deſpicable fellow who had formerly been a tradeſman: when I went down, therefore, they unanimouſly reſolved to avoid the moſt diſtant intercourſe with me. Inſtead of viſiting me as a ſtranger, they even returned my cards of invitation; and one worthy wight in particular, the grandſon of a cheeſemonger, threatened to horſe-whip my ſervant, if he ever more preſumed to come again on ſuch a meſſage from a pitiful little ſhopkeer. What to do, Mr. Babler, I knew not: poſſeſſed of a good eſtate, I could not herd with the very plebeians of the country; and thoſe with whom I thought myſelf entitled to rank diſdained to keep me company. Thus circumſtanced, I was obliged to return to the metropolis which had uſed me with ſo unremitting a degree of ill-nature, and forced to truſt to the caſual acquaintance of the play or the coffee-houſe, rather than detach myſelf entirely from ſociety.

The old adage, Mr. Babler, is a very good one, which ſays—‘ Conſider ‘ what I *am*, and not what I *have* ‘ been.’ If mankind were in general to be eſtimated by their original ſituations

tions in life, we ſhould find but very few of our moſt dignified characters entitled to reſpect. The biſhop that pronounces the benediction in our churches would be found ſome inconſiderable little chaplain; the chancellor, who, like another deity, directs in all matters of equity, would come out perhaps an obſcure chamber-council; and the miniſter, who made both biſhop and chancellor, appear no more, at his firſt ſetting out, than a paltry cornet of horſe: yet, ſurely, upon their advancement in the world, it would be quite wrong were they to crawl in the contracted circumference of their primeval circles. It would be ridiculous for the firſt to ſpend his evenings continually at the Chapter coffee-houſe; idle in the ſecond to paſs away his leiſure hours at the Grecian; and as improper for the third to be perpetually lounging at George's. If, therefore, thoſe who appear in the moſt elevated characters are to act conſiſtently with what they *are*, and not in conformity to what they *have* been, it cannot, ſurely, be improper for thoſe who move in a more ſubordinate ſphere to follow the ſame examples. A man, while he continues in trade, ſhould appear like a tradeſman; but if by any accident he ſhould arrive at the poſſeſſion of a plentiful eſtate, is it not as requiſite that he ſhould appear like a man of fortune? Upon all occaſions is it not neceſſary to act with a characteriſtic degree of propriety? Propriety, in fact, is conſtituted by the obſervance of character; and conſequently he that acts agreeable to the rules of propriety, is infinitely leſs entitled to the general ridicule, than he who is terrified, by the thing which he formerly has been, from aſſuming the conſequence really belonging to what he is. If you approve theſe ſentiments, Mr. Babler, you will kindly give them a place; if not, they ſhall be ſent for in a few days, by, Sir, your conſtant reader,

ANIMADVERTOR.

## Nº CXIX. SATURDAY, MAY 7.

TO THE BABLER.

SIR,

AMONG all the extraordinary characters in the extenſive rounds of infamy, who are entitled to the deteſtation of the public, I know of none more odious than thoſe who depend upon the bounty of ſome proſtitute for a maintenance, and live upon the wages which ſome miſerable woman earns by the moſt abandoned ſacrifice both of her peace and her reputation. Yet, that there are men ſo callous to every dictate of delicacy, ſo dead to every ſentiment of ſhame, as to boaſt of ſuch a ſupport, and even make an abſolute profeſſion of living by the profligacy of the other ſex, experience every day muſt fatally convince the ſenſible obſerver: let thoſe, however, who doubt the truth of the remark, caſt an eye over the following little portrait, and every ninety-nine readers in a hundred will immediately point out the perſon from whom I have taken the reſemblance.

Codrax was born of very obſcure parents in Shropſhire, and had little obligations either to nature or education, but the advantages of a tolerable perſon and an impudence unparalleled. Being ſent into the world at a very early age, with little other dependance than theſe two qualifications, he ſtrove upon all occaſions to make them anſwer ſome account. Hence, wherever he went, he was a man of profeſſed gallantry; yet, having no paſſions to gratify beſides the deſpicable avarice of his temper, his attacks were conſtantly directed againſt thoſe who were likely to ſupply him with money, the moment he obtained any place in their affections. Ignorant as he was of every thing elſe, he knew that a woman who parts with her heart, would be eaſily led to a ſacrifice of her intereſt, and therefore made uſe of the ſame paſſport to the purſe which gave him firſt of all an admittance to the perſon.

Among the number of thoſe who diſtinguiſhed him by particular marks of liberality, the miſtreſs of a certain noble lord, who was herſelf allowed an ample income by the munificence of her lover, made him an appointment out of her ſalary of four hundred pounds a year; furniſhed an elegant houſe for his convenience; and even ſet up an equipage to gratify his vanity. It is the conſtant curſe of keepers to be diſregarded by

those wretches on whom they are most lavish of their bounty; and it is as constantly the curse of the miserable wretches themselves to squander away what is thus obtained from the object of their aversion, on rascals who treat them with cruelty or contempt. This was the case of the unfortunate woman before us. Every sixpence which her artifice stole from the misguided partiality of her lord, she immediately gave into the possession of Codrax; and thought herself amply rewarded if he even condescended to receive these instances of her regard with any tolerable share of civility. Her fondness, however, was too palpable to be always concealed: her lord found out her attachment, and discarded her with the obloquy she merited. She, however, had still some jewels, and other valuable moveables. These she parted with gradually, to support the prodigality of her infamous paramour; and at last reduced herself to a single change of cloaths. Finding there was no prospect of benefiting any farther by her weakness, Codrax decamped without beat of drum, and left her to all the stings of pinching poverty and a despairing love. In this situation the keenness of her sufferings found a refuge in distraction; and a cell in Bedlam is now the retreat of an unhappy wretch, who some time ago could waste no less than thousands in the pursuit of her licentious dissipations. In the midst of all her distresses, Codrax, though opulent through the means of her very affection for him, refused to give her a shilling: he saw her for some time wandering naked through the streets, bereft alike of habitation and bread, yet still he denied the smallest relief. But who could expect a dawn of humanity in a bosom which was totally lost to honour; or think that a mind could be tinctured with the minutest touches of benevolence, which could become scandalously dependant even upon infamy for a support, and stoop to be a prostitute to actual prostitution!

One of the next strokes in the character of Codrax, is the destruction of a whole family in the country. Having, in consequence of his last connection, now got a handsome sum in his pocket, he went down to a certain country town in an elegant chariot, attended by a couple of servants, and took lodgings just by the house of a widow lady, who had been left, by the ridiculous partiality of a doating husband, the sole care of two children, one a daughter, quite marriageable; and, what was still worse, the sole possession of their father's estate, which amounted to five hundred pounds a year. Our hero's appearance was smart, and his person, as I have before observed, agreeable; he therefore easily got himself introduced to the old matron's house, and made such good use of his time, that in less than a fortnight both mother and daughter were entirely at his devotion. He continued this hopeful connection with the two, till he had either squandered away or engrossed the principal part of their fortune into his hands: he then took his leave triumphantly of the family; the female part of which did not long survive his departure. The mother died of a broken heart, in all the miseries, as I hear, of a parish work-house; and the daughter perished in childbed for want of common necessaries. What became of the son, I know not; but I think somebody told me that he is now either a common seaman in our fleets, or a common soldier in our armies.

Codrax is now leagued with a profligate performer in the service of the public, who has a considerable sum of money and some valuable jewels in her possession. He has for some time assumed the title of knighthood, and ordered in a variety of articles from various tradesmen, who have not yet perhaps repented of their credulity. How long this connection may continue, is a matter of little consequence to the world. Those, however, who see this, may be warned by the advice of a friend, and take care how they admit such a man into their families. Should my letter be productive of so salutary an effect, my wish will be answered; and I shall with pleasure acknowledge myself your very humble servant,

JUSTICE.

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## Nº CXX. SATURDAY, MAY 14.

IN one of my papers, ſome time ago, I threw out a hint relative to a paſſion which my young rogue Harry had conceived for Miſs Cornelia Marchmont, whom I mentioned as the very abſtract of every mental perfection, and every perſonal accompliſhment. My conjecture, for a conſiderable while, was acquiring freſh foundation; but as my nephew ſaid nothing of the matter to me, I took no notice of it to him, though I could not help ſmiling at the belief which he entertained, that I was totally ignorant in regard to the object of his affections. Laſt Monday ſevennight, however, he came to me with an air of the greateſt tranſport, and after apologizing for not having made me acquainted with the buſineſs a little ſooner, informed me, that Miſs Marchmont had bleſſed him that morning with the acknowledgment of a reciprocal eſteem, and that I was the perſon whom ſhe had pitched upon to open a negotiation between the two families.

As I do not know any young lady exiſting who poſſeſſes a greater ſhare of my eſteem than Miſs Marchmont, nor ever ſaw a perſon ſo immediately calculated to make my boy happy, I ſhook him cordially by the hand, wiſhed him joy from the bottom of my heart, and inſtantly ſet out to my ſiſter Rattle, who is a very worthy woman, though ſhe ſometimes will argue with me about a point of philoſophy; and is a very ſenſible one too, though ſhe has within theſe three months found fault with one or two of my Bablers. Luckily, on my entrance, I found Mr. Marchmont, Cornelia's father, chatting with her at the parlour fire; and as he and I have been intimately acquainted above thirty years, I opened the buſineſs of my errand without any ceremony, and this the more eſpecially, becauſe I knew neither could have any reaſonable objection to the match. Every thing turned out as I expected; both were rejoiced at the affection between the young people; and there being no mighty matters of law to retard the celebration of the nuptials, I thought it beſt to make ſhort work of the affair, and accordingly fixed the wedding for the following Saturday. The propoſition being approved by the parent of each, I retired to make Harry happy with the intelligence; and in purſuance of the agreement, I ſaw him bleſſed with one of the wortheſt, as well as ſweeteſt, girls in the univerſe, with ten thouſand pounds in her pocket, laſt Saturday morning. Harry has fifteen hundred a year himſelf; and my ſiſter, who has a very good jointure, is, I fancy, making a purſe for him into the bargain; ſo that, between what he muſt have upon her deceaſe, and upon the deceaſe of another perſon, who ſhall be nameleſs—there will be ample proviſion for a riſing family.

As I look upon a wedding-day to be one of the moſt important calls which either of the ſexes have in their whole lives for the exertion of an extraordinary delicacy, I was not a little attentive to the behaviour of my two favourites; and it gave me infinite pleaſure to obſerve, upon the whole, that Harry's behaviour was manly, tender, and reſpectful, without deviating into that fulſome diſagreeable fondneſs, of which even men of the beſt ſenſe are often guilty, when they have juſt obtained the woman of their heart. As to Cornelia, I never ſaw a young creature in her ſituation conduct herſelf with more propriety: to all the dignity of conſcious virtue, ſhe joined all the ineffable ſweetneſs of an engaging timidity; and though ſhe ſeemed proud of the man whom ſhe had thus preferred to all the world, yet ſhe had too much ſenſibility not to feel ſome amiable terrors, at ſo awful an alteration of her circumſtances.

After the performance of the ceremony, we all retired to Mr. Marchmont's; and there being a large company of us, Harry judiciouſly propoſed an unremitting round of amuſements, both before dinner and after, which entirely employed the attention even of the moſt volatile, and prevented the circulation of thoſe indelicate ambiguities with which the generality of wedding-days are frequently diſgraced. So that our mirth was, as it ought to be, mingled with good ſenſe and manners; and

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of course the harmony of a day could be little liable to interruption, while that harmony was regulated by reason and civility.

I have been often shocked, at the solemnization of a marriage, to see the ridiculous, I had almost said the profligate, levity with which people have approached the altar of the Divine Being, and jested with one another at the instant of supplicating a blessing from his hand: nay, I have been many times present where the clergyman who read the service has considered the affair as a matter of the greatest merriment, and even winked with a peculiar degree of archness at the bride, when he came to mention the procreation of children.

One would imagine, on a wedding-day, that if the friends of the married couple had even no veneration for the Deity, they would at least have some little share of politeness; and be actuated by a tender concern for the feelings of the lady, if they even felt no awe whatsoever in the presence of their God. A woman of any sensibility, on her wedding-day, must naturally be in circumstances sufficiently embarrassed, without hearing any illiberal pleasantries from the company to enhance the difficulties of her situation. When she considers that the happiness or misery of her life materially depends upon the choice which she has then made, she has cause enough for terror; and when she considers the privilege which is shortly to be claimed by the object of that choice; when she considers that the delicate reserve, in which she has all her life been brought up, is in an instant to be sacrificed to his inclination; I say, when all these things are considered, nothing can be more insolent, or indeed more cruel, than to aggravate her distress by the practice of any improper jocularities. People, I am sensible, are strangely attached to old customs; but every custom should be abolished, which is in the least repugnant to reason and civility: on which account, I flatter myself the reader will give a proper attention to this subject, and correct the error I have here been speaking of, as far as he is able, in the circuit of his acquaintance.

## Nº CXXI. SATURDAY, MAY 21.

DURING the time of the celebrated Thamas Kouli Kahn, it was a common amusement with him and his officers to take a number of asses, and try who could make the deepest incision in the backs of those unfortunate animals with a sabre: he that cut farthest was allowed the reputation of the strongest man; and frequently it happened that one of the miserable creatures was entirely divided asunder by the force of a single stroke. This anecdote was mentioned at a club, to which I have the honour of belonging, by a gentleman of unquestionable veracity and good sense, who was many years a resident in Persia, and was an occasional spectator at several of these inhuman diversions: the whole company, to their honour it must be mentioned, expressed an honest abhorrence at such barbarous relaxations; and we all congratulated ourselves upon living in a country, where it would be scandalous for the very first orders to imitate the Persian hero in his brutal exercises.

When I got home, however, I could not help reflecting, that notwithstanding the conscious pride of heart which we all possessed in the moment of self-congratulation, a number of amusements could be pointed out in this kingdom considerably more barbarous than the practice of hewing an ass to pieces, though this appeared so justly shocking to our imaginations: nay, what is still worse, the enjoyment of several barbarities is particularly reserved for people of the first figure and understanding, as if those, whose feeling should be uncommonly tender, had an additional title to the commission of cruelties, and as if a violent outrage upon every sentiment of humanity should be the peculiar privilege of birth and fortune. My readers may be surprized at this observation upon the people of England; yet, let me ask, if it be more cruel to torture an ass, than to torture a stag? or whether it is not even more compassionate to dispatch the first at a blow, than to pursue the latter for a number of hours,

hours, encreaſing the wretched animal's agony at every ſtep, and yielding it up at laſt to a death that muſt harrow up the boſom of any good-natured man who allows himſelf a moment's ſpace for reflection?

The more, in reality, that we conſider this point, the more we ſhall find it neceſſary to condemn the inhabitants of this civilized, this benevolent country. The Perſian, when he diſpatches the unfortunate aſs, commits no treſpaſs upon the property of his neighbour, nor manifeſts any diſregard to the diſtreſſes of a friend. The animal whom he deſtroys is his own, it is confined to a particular ſpot, and nobody can ſuffer in it's death but himſelf; whereas, in the proſecution of the chace with us, we trample inconſiderately through half a county, perhaps over the corn grounds and incloſures which the induſtrious farmer has cultivated, or planted at a very great expence; and if the perſon whom we thus injure expreſſes any reſentment at our conduct, we poſſibly horſewhip him for his inſolence, and ſend him home with the reparation of a bleeding head to comfort his wife and children. This is not all; in the phrenzy of a hunting-match, as well as being ſenſible of the wrongs which we offer to others, we become wholly unmindful of the prejudice which we do ourſelves; for, let our lives be of ever ſuch conſequence to our families, we become regardleſs of dangers, we never heſitate at leaps that are manifeſtly big with deſtruction; and even if the brother of our breaſt ſhould meet with any accident in this mad-headed courſe, ſo far from ſtopping to aſſiſt him, we make an abſolute jeſt of his misfortune, and expreſs a ſenſe of pleaſure in proportion as we find him involved in diſtreſs: if he diſlocates a leg or an arm by a fall from his horſe, he affords us an exquiſite entertainment; but if he actually fractures his ſkull, our mirth becomes extravagant, and we continue wild with delight, till happineſs is totally effaced by intoxication.

The civilized nations of Europe are extremely ready, upon all occaſions, to ſtigmatize every other part of the world with the epithet of barbarians; though the appellation might, with infinitely more propriety, be conferred upon themſelves. Among the politeſt of our neighbours there are a thouſand cuſtoms kept up which would fill the moſt uncultivated ſavage with horror, and give him, if poſſible, a ſtill more contemptible idea of Chriſtianity. An Indian Brachmin, for inſtance, will frequently go to the ſea-ſide, while the fiſhermen are drawing their nets, and purchaſe a whole boatful of fiſh, for the humane ſatisfaction of reſtoring the expiring creatures to their natural element, and ſnatching them from death: nay, the tenderneſs of the Brachmins is ſo exceſſive with regard to the animal creation, that they have been known to purchaſe cattle at an extraordinary price, merely to ſave them from ſlaughter; compaſſionately thinking the lowing heifer or the bleating lamb an equal, though an humbler heir of exiſtence, with themſelves. What, then, would men of this exalted benevolence think of the Britiſh nation, were they to ſee with what ſolemnity the right of murdering an innocent partridge, or a harmleſs hare, is ſettled by the legiſlative power of the kingdom? Were they to ſee the armies which at particular ſeaſons iſſue forth to deſtroy the warbling inhabitants of the air for actual diverſion, the ſportive tenants of the river for idle recreation; but, above all, what would they feel to ſee a generous domeſtic little bird ſcandalouſly tied to a ſtake, and denied the ſmalleſt chance of life, at the eve of a ſacred faſt ſet apart by our holy religion for the purpoſes of extraordinary ſanctity, and the buſineſs of unuſual mortification? It is impoſſible to imagine what they would feel, when there are even Chriſtians to be found who cannot ſee the practice without horror, nor think of it without tears.

I am far from carrying my notions of tenderneſs to the animal creation beyond the bounds of reaſon, as the Brachmins do, who think it irreligious to feed upon any thing which has ever been endued with life, becauſe I believe the great Author of all things deſigned theſe animals principally for the uſe and ſuſtenance of man: yet, at the ſame time that I ſuppoſe they were formed by the Deity for the relief of our neceſſities, I cannot imagine he ever intended they ſhould be tortured through wantonneſs, or deſtroyed for diverſion. Nor can I imagine, but that even the ſuperſtitious forbearance of the Brachmins is infinitely more pleaſing in his ſight, than the inconſiderate cruelty of thoſe who profeſs an immediate obedience to his word. A God all-mercy never takes

delight

delight in the unneceſſary agony of a creature whom he has been pleaſed to endue with exiſtence: we therefore offer an inſult to him, when we give a needleſs pang to the meaneſt of his creatures; and abſolutely pervert the deſign of his Providence, whenever we ſacrifice thoſe animals to our amuſements which he has conſtituted entirely for the relief of our wants.

I have thrown out theſe reflections with a benevolent purpoſe. As ſuch numbers of the ignorant and the thoughtleſs are apt to promote their amuſements at the expence of their humanity, ſhould what I have here offered be attended with the reformation but of an individual, I ſhall think my time well employed. Ridicule I muſt naturally expect from numbers, for daring to combat with favourite prejudices; but it is my conſolation, that no witticiſm whatever which may be aimed at me as a writer can, on the preſent ſubject of animadverſion, do me the minuteſt injury as a man.

## N° CXXII. SATURDAY, MAY 28.

WE are told by Plutarch, that whenever the celebrated Phocion ſtood up in the ſenate to ſpeak upon the buſineſs of the nation, Demoſthenes, who generally eſpouſed a different ſyſtem of politics, would whiſper the perſon who ſat next him, and ſay, *Here comes the pruning-hook of my periods*. For my own part, greatly as I myſelf may fall under the common cenſure with the generality of my brother ſcribblers, I could nevertheleſs wiſh that the preſent age had ſome ſalutary pruning-hook to lop off the redundancies of expreſſion in literary compoſition, that the reader might not be put to the trouble of going over an unneceſſary number of words, which, inſtead of helping out a writer's ſenſe, moſt commonly have quite a contrary effect, and only ſerve to obſcure the tendency of his arguments.

In the proſaic productions of the preſs, our modern writers, inſtead of aiming at conciſeneſs and perſpicuity, are too apt to ſtudy what is called a *rotundity* of period; and too ready to treſpaſs upon propriety, for the mere conſideration of embelliſhment. Thus, to make a ſentence roll floridly on the ear, they often run into the moſt tedious repetitions; and uſe double the requiſite quantity of words, from an unaccountable ſuppoſition that an elegance of ſtile is conſtituted by an abſolute prolixity: whereas, a moment's recollection muſt ſatisfy a ſenſible mind that the ſooner we diſcover our meanings, the more maſterly our pens muſt be naturally eſteemed; and the ſooner we inform the underſtanding of a reader, the more capable we are to anſwer the important deſigns of his inſtruction.

In poetical compoſition, there is nothing more frequent than the practice of clogging a line with a load of uſeleſs epithet, or unmeaning pleonaſm, merely to fill out the neceſſary quantity of ſyllables. To point out what I mean more ſtrongly, I ſhall give the reader an example from a man of no leſs conſequence than Addiſon. The following ill-written ſimile in Cato has been greatly admired, and even in the Guardian it is quoted as one of the principal beauties which excites the admiration of Lady Lizard and her family—

So the *pure limpid* ſtream, when *foul'd* with
*ſtains*
Of *guſhing torrents* and *deſcending rains*,
*Works itſelf clear, and as it runs refines,*
*Till by degrees the floating mirror ſhines:*
Reflect each flow'r that on the border grows,
And a new heaven in it's fair boſom ſhews.

In the four firſt lines of this ſimile, the judicious reader will immediately perceive that the poet has done little more than called a ſpade a ſpade; that is, made uſe of ſynonimous epithets or meanings entirely ſimilar. The epithet *pure* is juſt the ſame as *limpid*; and we all know that when a ſtream is *fouled*, it muſt be *ſtained* of courſe. In like manner, *to work itſelf clear*, *it muſt refine as it runs*; and, conſequently, refining only as it runs, it's ſhining muſt be gradual. To be ſerious: the poet might as well repeat the term *pure*, as follow it with the term *limpid*; and he might with juſt the ſame elegance tell us, that the ſtream was ſtained with ſtains, as uſe a word of juſt the ſame ſignification. Mr. Addiſon, however highly entitled to our admiration as a proſe-

profe-writer, has, as a verfifier, but fmall pretenfions to our applaufe; it is not therefore fo much to cenfure him that I have pointed out the prefent imperfection, as to warn my poetical purchafers from copying the miftake. In poetry our epithets fhould never be forced—properly ufed, they have a fine effect; but when they are vifibly dragged in to fpin out the meafure of a line, and are moreover bald repetitions of the fame idea, they become abominable. Nothing contributes more to their beauty than variety; and nothing is eafier than to render them various. A ftream, for inftance, has more qualities than one; it may be fmooth as well as limpid; and a rofe, befides it's colour, has fragrance to diftinguifh it. When, therefore, our objects have qualities enough to fupply us with a diverfity of epithets, it muft be a ftrange forgetfulnefs indeed to pick out a fynonim, and to tell the world that what is excellent is excellent.

The great art of all ftile is for a writer never to throw away his words; never to introduce any thing into his piece but what is really neceffary for the main purpofe of his defign. It is not becaufe he has a pompous period of profe to difplay, or has a mind to parade with a particular blaze of poetical fancy, that he fhould overleap the bounds of propriety. No compofition can have merit but in proportion as it is founded upon good fenfe; and good fenfe muft always feel an injury where a ftab is directed at propriety. For thefe reafons, an author fhould always aim at faying pertinent things in preference to fine ones; and when his partiality for fome new fentiment is running away with his judgment, he ought to confider that the eye of the world is much more inclined to kindle with difdain, than to fparkle with admiration; he ought to confider that an indifferent reader may look with the greateft contempt upon the very paffage which he himfelf views with fo exquifite a degree of fatisfaction; and he ought alfo to confider, that the nobleft flight of genius, improperly brought in, is at beft but a fhining abfurdity.

For thefe reafons, therefore, when a writer fits down to work upon a fubject which he imagines of confequence to mankind, let him by all means prefer the fubftantial advantages of intrinfic ufe to the flimfey fripperies of outfide ornament; let him endeavour to be clear before he ftrives to be florid; and let him, where he aims at a floridity of ftile, take care that he is not in danger of ftriking on the quickfands of a dull repetition, or a lifelefs prolixity. Stile is but a very infignificant circumftance, unlefs it has actual matter to embellifh; and it muft render a man truly ridiculous indeed, who takes a world of pains in the formation of a fentence which cannot poffibly anfwer the moft inconfiderable end. Upon the whole, if we cannot attain a ftile in literary compofition without tedioufnefs or tautology; if we are forced to load every period with an unneceffary weight of words, merely to give our fentiments a little air of fmoothnefs and order; I think it would in general be adivfeable if we avoided an acquaintance with pen and ink; though, at any rate, a plain little frock will become us infinitely better than a tawdry fantaftic coat covered entirely with tinfel, and marking us out to the world as a ridiculous compound of affectation and inability.

## Nº CXXIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 5.

IT is now above four years fince the Babler firft prefumed to folicit the attention of the public; and during that period he has been happily favoured with a reception which, while it does the higheft honour to the generofity of his readers, impreffes the moft lively fenfe of gratitude upon his heart: yet this encouragement he has not vanity to afcribe, even by implication, to the account of fuperior abilities; on the contrary, he is humble enough to confefs a confcioufnefs, that the rectitude of his intentions in the caufe of virtue has been the principal bafis of his fuccefs; and is fatisfied that he owes his little reputation more to the uprightnefs of his defign than to the extent of his underftanding; yet, upon recollection, he is not fure but he betrays a greater fhare of felffufficience, even in his humility, than if he had laid the moft arrogant pretenfion

to parts: the world, however, has it's forms, and those forms should be constantly complied with where they are neither ridiculous nor criminal; therefore, though a well-meaning mind may be reckoned among the first of all the human qualifications, still, as it is a qualification which every body has it in his power to possess, a man cannot be said to raise himself insolently above his neighbours, when he claims no more than what he willingly allows to the meanest of them all.

The kindness of the public having now put it in my power to make a tolerable selection from my various papers, and the marriage of my nephew, with whom I reside, having considerably lessened the necessary time which should be devoted to the conduct of a weekly essay; I propose taking leave of my readers in the present number, with an observation or two upon the nature of periodical publication, and an excuse for the evident disparity which must be constantly expected in productions of this kind. The generality of writers, when they undertake to amuse the world upon a plan of this nature, imagine that, because a paper or two may be struck off with a happy facility, a thousand may be composed with an equal degree of readiness; and never once doubt, while the world continues in good humour with these works, but what they will be able to go on with an unceasing variety of subjects, and an unabating fervor of inclination. The novelty of the undertaking, however, is scarcely worn off, before the mind, with that lassitude which it feels in a constant application to all it's other pursuits, flags under the weight of study and fatigue, and anxiously wishes to be disengaged; it sickens at the oppressive tax which it has thus laid upon it's own enjoyments; and was it not for a secret fear that the discontinuance of it's toil would be attributed, not to an impatience of constraint, but to a want of abilities, many of our most celebrated essayists would have soon relinquished their task, and consulted their convenience, even before the instruction of the world, and the establishment of their reputations.

There is scarcely a walk of literature which is reckoned so easy, or which in fact is so difficult, as this species of periodical publication. In every other stile of composition, a writer may display his abilities on that particular subject with which he is most intimately acquainted, and may raise a considerable share of character by expatiating on such topics as are most immediately agreeable to his imagination: besides this, he may allow himself what time he thinks proper for the perfection of his works; and is never confined, by a want of room, from delivering himself fully upon the minutest point of speculation. But the case is far otherwise with the unfortunate essayist; the miscellaneous nature of his undertaking forces him to furnish a variety of subjects, and obliges him to enter upon numberless discussions, which require not only a general knowledge of the world, but are often repugnant to his inclination: nor do the inconveniencies under which he labours rest here; under an indispensable necessity of publishing on a particular day, whether he is either at leisure or in health, unembarrassed in his situation or undisturbed in his mind, he must go on, and even comprise his thoughts within such a compass as may suit the convenience of his printer. Before he can well begin, the scanty limits of his paper renders it necessary to conclude; and his whole essay must be contained in a quantity of words which is scarcely sufficient to serve for an introduction.

I do not mention these matters by any means to enhance the merit of my performance, but to apologize in reality for it's faults. A reader who does not consider how an essayist is circumstanced, will often have opportunity to animadvert upon his productions with the greatest severity; he will find many subjects handled with little knowledge, and others discussed with less force: his good-nature must therefore mitigate the harshness of his criticism; and he must never pronounce upon the work without considering the situation of the author. When I first began to make a selection from the various papers which have appeared under the title of the BABLER, I was in reality astonished at the intolerable dulness of a number which I committed to the flames; and could not help admiring the goodness of the world, which, for the sake of a few, I hope not altogether unworthy the regard of a good man, could patiently put up with heaps of stupidity. The more I considered the generosity of the public, the more I was encouraged to go on with

my

my ſelection. The ſame candour which I experienced when I appeared periodically, I flattered myſelf would attend the publication of a volume or two; eſpecially when, by weeding out the moſt inſufferable papers, I had in ſome meaſure rendered myſelf leſs undeſerving of the general protection: ſuch of my readers, therefore, as may not be aſhamed to ſee me in their libraries, have now an opportunity of buying me in volumes. Yet, greatly as I have been encouraged by the public, the purchaſers of

OWEN'S WEEKLY CHRONICLE

will have occaſion to be pleaſed at my declining to labour any longer in their ſervice, as a gentleman of *real* genius is to fill up the column which I have enjoyed in that paper, with an eſſay, intituled,

THE WISDOM OF THE WEEK;

OR, A

REGISTER OF PUBLIC ABSURDITIES:

in which I doubt not but they will find infinitely more entertainment. Occaſionally, I ſhall requeſt the author to favour me with a place; for though my engagements will not allow me to write without intermiſſion, I ſhall embrace every opportunity of aſſuring the ladies and gentlemen who have hitherto honoured me with their protection, that I am, with the greateſt gratitude and reſpect, their moſt devoted humble ſervant,

THE BABLER.

# CONTENTS.

## VOLUME THE FIRST.


NUMBER — PAGE

I. A General Reflection on the Choice of Titles for a periodical Essay, and a Description of Bablers - - - - - - - - 5

II. Observations on the Impropriety of marrying a Woman where we know her Affections are engaged by another; with an affecting Case of Matrimonial Infelicity resulting from that Cause - - - 6

III. A Letter from Winifred Tapely, a Haberdasher's Wife, complaining of the Coxcomb her Husband - - - - - - - - 8

IV. A remarkable Story of the Unhappiness arising from the Infidelity of a Wife - - - - - - - - - - - 9

V. Observations on the Fondness which People always have for those Subjects of Conversation which put us most in mind of their particular Qualifications - - - - - - - - - - 11

VI. An original Letter of Sir Robert Walpole's on the general Source of Patriotism in England - - - - - - - - 12

VII. A Letter from a Citizen on the ridiculous Propensity which Tradesmen have to raise the natural Vanity of their Children, by dressing them in a Manner superior to their Situations in Life - - - 14

VIII. A Political Dictionary - - - - - - - - - - 15

IX. The Depravity of Modern Wit, strikingly exemplified in the Character of Ned Frailby - - - - - - - - - - - 16

X. An original Letter from Dr. Swift to Mr. Pope, which never appeared in his Works - - - - - - - - - - - 18

XI. A Letter from Tom Giddy on the Instability of human Happiness, with a whimsical Method by which he sought to obtain a permanent Content - - - - - - - - - - - - 19

XII. Reflections on the Dangers attending a Propensity to illiberal Intrigues, with some Stanzas from an Essay written by a Lady, ruined by a profligate Lover; and an extraordinary Letter from a new-married Man to a very fine Woman, who had distinguished him by some palpable Advances of a licentious Partiality - - - - - 21

XIII. A Satyrical Vocabulary for the Use of the rising Generation - - 23

XIV. Impatience and Stoicism humourously set forth in the remarkable Character of Frank Surly - - - - - - - - - 24

XV. Reflections on the great Defects both in writing, and in setting those Compositions to Music which are dedicated to the Service of the Church - - - - - - - - - - - - 26

XVI. The former Subject continued, with a Hymn; and the happy Consequences which it produced in the Story of a very amiable young Lady and a very deserving young Gentleman - - - - - 27

XVII. The Absurdity of bringing up our Children with too great a Degree of Parsimony, where we have a large Fortune to leave at our Death, exposed in the History of Will Weakly - - - - 28

XVIII. Serious Considerations on the Inefficacy of nominal Christianity to promote our future Salvation - - - - - - - 30

XIX. Orasmin and Almira, an Eastern Tale - - - - - - 31

NUMB. PAGE

XX. Reflections upon Fortitude, with remarkable Inſtances of this Quality in the Savages of America - - - - - - - - 33

XXI. The Futility of modern Friendſhip keenly ridiculed in the Hiſtory of Will Threadbare - - - - - - - - - - 35

XXII. Harry Rattle introduced to the Reader's Acquaintance. Reflections on the ſhameful Licentiouſneſs of our convivial Entertainments - 36

XXIII. The former Subject continued; with a Scene of Altercation between two intimate Friends about the Refuſal of a Toaſt - - - 37

XXIV. Strictures on the Abſurdities of thoſe Ladies who, through a Fondneſs for Admiration, admit the Viſits of a Man who openly profeſſes a Deſign upon their Peace and their Reputation - - 39

XXV. Reflections on the Impropriety of forming a matrimonial Union where there is a great Diſparity in the Age of the Parties - - - 40

XXVI. The ſame Subject affectingly enforced by the melancholy Story of a ſuperannuated Huſband - - - - - - - - - 42

XXVII. A remarkable Inſtance of paternal Folly—filial Ingratitude—accidental Reformation—and general Felicity - - - - - 43

XXVIII. The Impertinence of Second-rate Wits, or Sputterers of Good Things, cenſured; with the Character of Dick Brazen, a Member of this hopeful Fraternity - - - - - - - - 45

XXIX. The fatal Cuſtom of Duelling, strictly set forth in a Letter from Mrs. Wellworth - - - - - - - - - - - 46

XXX. Obſervations on the general Immorality of our Drinking Songs—with a Ballad recommended as a Standard for Bacchanalians in future 47

XXXI. The Affectation of modern Politeneſs expoſed in the Character of Mrs. Notable, and contraſted with a Picture of Sir Harry Downright - - - - - - - - - - - - 49

XXXII. The Generoſity of an injured Daughter, a true Story, and a remarkable one - - - - - - - - - - - - 50

XXXIII. The Arrogance of a learned Huſband exemplified in a Letter from Mrs. Highmore - - - - - - - - - - 52

XXXIV. Reflections upon the Folly of Singularity - - - - - 53

XXXV. The Inſtitution of Holidays proved evidently dangerous to the Morals of the lower People - - - - - - - - 54

XXXVI. Exceſſive Senſibility a very great Impediment to Felicity - - 56

XXXVII. The Meanneſs of Women who receive Preſents from a Lover, without having any Deſign of marrying him, highly condemned—and ſhewn to be greatly injurious to the Delicacy of the Female Character - - - - - - - - - - - 57

XXXVIII. On the ſhameful Diſregard of Cleanlineſs in Appearance, after a Lady has obtained a Huſband - - - - - - - 58

XXXIX. On the Abſurdity of terrifying Children with the Notion of Ghoſts and Hobgoblins, as the Impreſſions which are made upon infant Minds are never to be wholly rooted from the Imagination - 59

XL. Affecting Story of an elderly Lady who married a young Man - 61

XLI. A Picture of Domeſtic Life, in which the greateſt Quarrels that happen between married People are proved to ſpring in general from the moſt trifling Circumſtances - - - - - - - - 62

XLII. On the Advantages of having Sons in preference to Daughters—with a Journal of a young Lady, lately deceaſed, which muſt at leaſt obtain the Praiſe of the fair Reader, if it does not even excite her Imitation - - - - - - - - - - - - 64

XLIII. The Sentimental Libertine; a Story founded upon Fact - - 65

XLIV. Conſiderations of a religious Turn, proving the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity to be more dangerous to our eternal Happineſs than abſolute Atheiſm, unleſs we reduce the Precepts into Practice, and prove the Purity of our Belief by the Rectitude of our Lives - - 67

XLV. Melancholy Situation of a Woman of Quality made miſerable by an Elevation to unexpected Greatneſs; and then reproached with

Want

NUMB. PAGE

Want of Gratitude, from an Incapacity to love the Author of her Diftrefs - 68
XLVI. The remarkable Hiftory of an Author - 70
XLVII. The Pleafure of building Caftles in the Air; and the Certainty that the Poffeffion of any Object always leffens the Value to our Imagination - 72
XLVIII. The Inconvenience and Abfurdity of Country Houfes to the middling Tradefmen - 73
XLIX. On the ridiculous Affectation of dreffing out of Character - 75
L. The Danger of Profperity—Contemptible Inftances of it's Effect upon a well known Character - 76
LI. The affecting Hiftory of a young Lady feduced into a Paffion by the filent Refpect and feeming Attachment of a Male Coquet, who artfully avoided any verbal Declarations of Love - 77
LII. Franknefs in a Lady, and Generofity in a Lover, happily rewarded - 79
LIII. On the Abfurdity of talking technically; and the Shame of fpeaking indelicately in the Prefence of the Ladies - 81
LIV. The Freedom of Action, which the Circumftance of Sex gives a Man, proved a Misfortune—The Journal of a Libertine - 82
LV. Critique on the celebrated Elegy in a Country Church Yard - 84
LVI. Account of Mifs Cornelia Marchmont—Her fenfible Rejection of an impertinent Lover - 86
LVII. Indigence and Literature—with the Journal of a Genius deftitute of Money and Friends - 87
LVIII. A Defence of the prefent Age againft the unaccountable Inclination of modern Writers to eftimate the Virtue of an Æra in Proportion to it's Antiquity - 89
LIX. Extremes in Appearance difapproved; but even a Coxcomb deemed a more tolerable Companion than the Sloven, wholly inattentive to the Decency of Externals - 90
LX. The Folly of running into expenfive Entertainments cenfured, efpecially among People of middling Fortunes or intimate Acquaintance - 92
LXI. Obfcenity highly culpable in all People; but among old Men, in the Prefence of their Families, abfolutely unpardonable - 93
LXII. Fatal Effects of bringing up Daughters with an extravagant Opinion of their own perfonal Attractions - 95
LXIII. The foregoing Subject exemplified in the Hiftory of Theodora - 96
LXIV. The Impertinence of thofe People feverely reprehended, who conftantly play the Argus on the minuteft Circumftances either in the Appearance or Manners of their Neighbours - 98
LXV. Contemptible Character of Subaltern Bucks, and Covent Garden Fine Gentlemen - 99

---

## VOLUME THE SECOND.

NUMB. PAGE

LXVI. THE loweft Orders of People proved to be the only true Patriots in England - 101
LXVII. Reflections on the Abfurdity of Toafting—On the Rudenefs of banifhing the Ladies after Dinner or Supper—and on the general Mifmanagement of convivial Entertainments in this Country - 103
LXVIII. Critique upon Dryden's Guifcard and Sigifmonda - 104
LXIX. The Minds of Mankind nearly alike through all the Difparity of their Situations—Man the Caufe of his own Mifery—and the

Reader

NUMB. PAGE

Reader earnestly recommended to adopt the Philosophy of Dick Wilkins - - - - - - - - - - - - - 107

LXX. Reflections of the Drama, and the Stage, proved to have arisen in good Sense and Decency, however it has of late Years declined in the Brilliancy of Wit, or the Sparkle of Imagination - - - 108

LXXI. Dangerous Consequences arising from the Possession of a good Voice, or any other convivial Accomplishment, to a Man who must labour for his Bread—Interesting Story of Will Hargrave - - - 109

LXXII. The officious Sincerity of a rude Fact no Accomplishment—The History of Sally Edwards - - - - - - - - - 112

LXXIII. Necessary Strictures on some very common, yet disregarded Indecencies, amongst the greatest Pretenders to Breeding and Politeness 114

LXXIV. The Absurdity of vindicating the Credit of our Families, where the Misconduct of our female Relations themselves have contributed to their Disgrace, exemplified in the History of Theodosia - - 115

LXXV. Reflections on the ridiculous Affectation of giving moral Instructions to our Children, where the Tendency of our Precepts is constantly destroyed by the Force of our Examples; in a Letter from Eleonora - - - - - - - - - - - 118

LXXVI. The Equity of Providence su[illegible]'s various Dispositions of temporal Benefits to Mankind - - - - - - 119

LXXVII. The Inefficacy of an academical Education in the Enlargement of our Minds, set forth in some curious Anecdotes of Tom Welbank 121

LXXVIII. On the general Meanness which we find in Parade; with a Contrast between an ostentatious Man and a Man of real Generosity - 122

LXXIX. On the dangerous Inattention which Ladies testify to the Morals of their Lovers; with an Extract from the celebrated Sermons to young Women, by Dr. Fordyce - - - - - - - - - 123

LXXX. Farther Remarks upon the preposterous Custom of Toasting at our social Entertainments - - - - - - - - 125

LXXXI. Friendship incompatible with a Disparity of Circumstances—Interesting Story of two Jewish Soldiers - - - - - 127

LXXXII. The Disobedient Daughter, or the affecting History of Mrs. Villars 128

LXXXIII. An entertaining Sketch of a strolling Company of Players; with serious Advice against too great a Passion for the Stage - - 132

LXXXIV. The Folly of those People exposed, who avoid entering into Marriage for fear of meeting with a tyrannical Wife; yet stoop to any Servility from a ridiculous Dread of offending an infamous Strumpet - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 134

LXXXV. Observations on the general Insipidity or Profligacy of our amorous and drinking Songs - - - - - - - - - 135

LXXXVI. The Vanity of being seen with those of greater Consequence than ourselves, the Parent of a thousand Servilities - - - - 1[illegible]

LXXXVII. Considerations of a new Nature, on the Education of the Ladies 138

LXXXVIII. The very great Absurdity in supposing that a Man of Learning must always be a Man of Sense; with some singular Anecdotes of Dick Thornhill - - - - - - - - - - - - 140

LXXXIX. The Misfortune of a young Lady grown up to Years of Discretion, in having too juvenile a Father, exemplified in the Situation of Miss Hortensia Medlicoat - - - - - - - - 141

XC. Reflections on the general Absurdity of Singers in private Company; with some easy Rules by which the worst Voice may hope to sing at least bearably - - - - - - - - - - - 143

XCI. Religious Considerations on the Causes of human Infelicity - - 144

XCII. The Pleasures of Life proved more fatiguing than the closest Application to the Duties of our temporal Concerns, or our eternal Happiness - - - - - - - - - - - - - 146

XCIII. On the Absurdity, nay, the Impiety of many humble Supplications to the Divine Being; a Vision - - - - - - - 147


XCIV. A

NUMB. PAGE

XCIV. A Defence of Hypocriſy, as far as the Evil of our Example may have a Tendency to corrupt the Morals of our Neighbours - - - - 148

XCV. Reflections on the Decline of Filial Piety in England - - - - 150

XCVI. The Want of Virtue in the Times, ſuppoſed to ariſe not ſo much from actual Depravity, as a Want of Conſideration - - - - - 151

XCVII. On the latent Preference which, in ſpite of all the Murmurs of the World at the Diſpenſations of Providence, every Man gives himſelf to his Neighbour - - - - - - - - - - - 152

XCVIII. On the general Propenſity of the World to reverence the Rich, though they reap no Advantage whatſoever from the Affluence which creates this unaccountable Reſpect - - - - - 153

XCIX. On the abſurd Suppoſition which the Ladies entertain, that their Affections are under the immediate Direction of the Stars - - 155

C. Reflections on the Greatneſs of modern Refinement, particularly in the Neglect of the ſacred Feſtival of Chriſtmas - - - - - 156

CI. Vice and Virtue generally judged of from our Situations in Life—Patriotiſm of an Iriſh Malefactor - - - - - - - - - 157

CII. The Dangers to which a Woman expoſes herſelf by marrying a Man too much attached to the Tavern - - - - - - - - - 159

CIII. Female Quarrels leſs ridiculous in their Cauſe, as well as leſs fatal in their Conſequence, than the Quarrels of the other Sex - - 160

CIV. Animadverſions on Doctor Johnſon's celebrated Edition of Shakeſpeare - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 162

CV. A new Syſtem of Oratory for the Bar, abſolutely neceſſary for the careful Peruſal of young Practitioners - - - - - - - 164

CVI. On the prepoſterous Cuſtom of Tradeſmen in dreſſing up their Sons and Daughters with an Elegance to which they have too much Modeſty to aſpire themſelves - - - - - - - - - 165

CVII. A Defence of Luxury againſt the Reaſonings of our moſt celebrated Philoſophers - - - - - - - - - - - - - 167

CVIII. A remarkable Inſtance of real Generoſity in Charles Haſtings - 168

CIX. The Danger of leaving our Wives entirely Miſtreſſes of our Fortunes, when at our Deaths we happen to have Children - - - - 169

CX. The foregoing Argument lamentably ſupported in the Story of Horatio 171

CXI. An Encreaſe of Circumſtances a conſtant Source of Wants; a Poſition ſufficiently demonſtrated in the Hiſtory of a Clergyman - - 173

CXII. An ill-directed Prudence downright Extravagance - - - - 175

CXIII. The Perfidy which we meet in our Friendſhips, or in our Loves, leſs the Fault of the World, than Error of our own Partiality - 176

CXIV. The melancholy Story of Aranthes and Aſpaſia - - - - 177

CXV. The Dangers of becoming an Author, with Remarks upon Mr. Pope's Rape of the Lock, and Literary Abilities in General - 178

CXVI. The greateſt Virtue the Parent of the greateſt Crimes—Or the ſingular Story of Frank Leeſon - - - - - - - - - 180

CXVII. Reflections on ſome ſtriking Improprieties in the Management of our Theatres - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 182

CXVIII. Arguments on the Propriety of regulating our Appearance in Proportion to the Nature of our Circumſtances - - - - - 183

CXIX. Story of a Male Proſtitute - - - - - - - - - - 185

CXX. The Marriage of the Babler's Nephew Harry Rattle with Miſs Cornelia Marchmont—with Reflections on the general Manner of paſſing a Wedding Day - - - - - - - - - - 187

CXXI. On Tenderneſs to the Animal Creation, and the common Barbarity of our moſt celebrated Amuſements - - - - - - - 188

CXXII. Reflections on Literature - - - - - - - - - - 190

CXXIII. The Concluſion - - - - - - - - - - - - - 191

FINIS.